



IT'S ALL TRUE

ORSON WELLES'S PAN-AMERICAN ODYSSEY

CATHERINE L. BENAMOU

It's All True

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*To the memory of my father, Michel Benamou (1929–1978),
who, among other sources of inspiration,
gave me my first “passports”
to Mexico and Brazil
and to*

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With gratitude and axé

It's All True

Orson Welles's Pan-American Odyssey

Catherine L. Benamou



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Too much effort and real love went into the entire project for it to fail and come to nothing in the end. I have a degree of faith in it which amounts to fanaticism, and you can believe that if It's All True goes down into limbo I'll go with it.

ORSON WELLES, *in a letter to Fernando Pinto*, 26 February 1943

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AUTHOR'S NOTE Throughout the notes and in the text, all translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

Introduction

Locating Orson Welles's *It's All True*

It's All True is the name given by Orson Welles to a four-part film project he initiated in the spring of 1941, just after the release of *Citizen Kane*, while he and his company, Mercury Productions, were still under contract to RKO Radio Studio. Three episodes were shot on location in Mexico and Brazil in 1941 and 1942, a period marked by the entry of the United States into World War II. The film, part documentary, part fiction, was Orson Welles's first attempt at cross-cultural representation on film, linking topics as diverse as the evolution of jazz music portrayed through the life of Louis Armstrong, bull raising and bullfighting in central Mexico, samba music during the yearly Carnival celebration in Rio de Janeiro, the epic voyage of poor fishermen on Brazil's northeast coast to Rio de Janeiro, and, potentially, the capture and slaying of the Inka Atawallpa by Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro in sixteenth-century Peru. The project was suspended, however, before filming could be completed.

Since the early forties, both the footage and its title have been put to new uses and traveled different cultural itineraries. Today, *It's All True* is a label attached to 216 cans, or nearly 200,000 feet, of nitrate footage (mostly camera negative) stored at the UCLA Film and Television Archive in Los Angeles. Believed to be missing or destroyed for many years, portions of that footage have entered into public circulation as part of partially restored and reconstructed versions of Welles's original project, first in 1986 in a twenty-two-minute "trailer," *Four Men on a Raft*, produced by Fred Chandler and longtime Welles collaborator Richard Wilson, with the support of the American Film Institute, then in a feature-length film, *It's All True: Based on an Unfinished Film by Orson Welles*, released theatrically in 1993.¹ These substantive revivals have been paralleled by figurative uses of the film's title, which has been rephrased in essayistic commentaries on the film and its history, such as Richard

Wilson's published eyewitness account "It's Not *Quite* All True" (1970),² and Brazilian filmmaker Rogério Sganzerla's feature-length film homage, *Nem Tudo É Verdade* (*Not All of It Is True*, 1985).³ In 1994, *It's All True* became the motto for an international documentary film festival held each year in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Then, in 1999, Canadian playwright Jason Sherman attached the title *It's All True* to his play about the rehearsal and improvised opening (after a governmental shutdown) of Orson Welles and John Houseman's controversial play *The Cradle Will Rock*, in New York City. The performance ended the pair's contractual engagement with the Federal Theatre Project and helped to launch their independent Mercury Theatre company in the late thirties.⁴ While it is not entirely clear what Sherman intended by applying the film title to a play about a play, like *The Cradle Will Rock*, *It's All True* signaled a bold act of social critique and artistic experimentation by Welles and collaborators while working under the auspices of the U.S. state—in this case, Nelson Rockefeller's wartime Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA).

Counterbalancing these efforts at retrieval and invocation—and belying the film's potential contributions as a tool of diplomacy and cultural understanding—has been the prevailing tendency in Europe and the United States to describe *It's All True* as a "tropical misadventure" or a "curse,"⁵ yielding the lasting impression that the project was disruptive, even harmful, to Orson Welles's film career, while paradoxically denying its very historicity as either a text or an event. Just as the original project, as its title coyly suggests, tested the boundaries between fictional and documentary modes of screen representation, these other acts of naming and labeling cast doubt on our ability to adequately behold or retrieve the film and its history, even as they tempt us to seek out its concealed "truths" and the reasons behind its enduring relevance. We are thus doubly reminded of how many public accounts of *It's All True* continue to stand in oblique relationship to the flow of events and the partially reconstructed work in progress, recalling Jonathan Rosenbaum's description of the ongoing legacy of Eric von Stroheim's film *Greed* (1924) as both "myth" and "object." (According to Rosenbaum, the "myth" consists of speculations at to what the film might have been had the director's version prevailed, whereas the "object" refers to what has been phenomenally available for viewing and thus "quotable" for use in other films.)⁶ Like Welles's *It's All True*, the completion of *Greed* encountered considerable resistance from the producing studio (in this case, MGM); as a result, the film fell prey to radical cuts and relative inaccessibility to the moviegoing public. Yet the erratic and widely ranging treatment of *It's All True*, from suppression (the "object") to disparagement and fetishization (the "myth"), since Welles relinquished the project in 1946 has weighed just as heavily in shaping its historical fate as its initial suspension in 1942 by RKO.

In this book, I attempt to push against the drift of the film's material ero-

sion and historical erasure, and begin retrieving and reconstructing the original work as envisioned and produced by Orson Welles and his collaborators, along with its material and discursive itineraries across national boundaries and over a sixty-year time span. This retrieval need not exclude the richly symptomatic mythologies that, for years, have brought about revaluations and resignifications of *It's All True*, in an odd way, keeping its memory alive. Analyzed as a metatextual corpus, such mythologies provide a means of charting the film's changing cultural status and of gauging its political and cultural effectivity within and across specific spheres of social interaction, or "habitus."⁷ One question that body of criticism raises, whether it takes primary, contemporary or secondary, retrospective form, is whether or not the film suffered the same politico-cultural or socially symbolic fate in each of its contexts of production; such differences in reception, as I explore in chapter 3, can be historically and heuristically useful.

The widening or "traveling" of the geohistorical lens used to retrieve and interpret the film is informed by the twin premises, advanced by the *Annales* school of historiography, that

1. the causes and impact of a phenomenon may not be fully revealed in the short run but might be best understood by way of slower processes developing over a *longue durée*, or lengthy time span; this is especially the case for a suppressed and unrealized project such as *It's All True*, which can be seen as falling within the realm of what *Annales* historian Fernand Braudel called "unconscious" hemispheric history;⁸ and
2. the period to be analyzed should be defined in accordance with the phenomenon under study and its various historical manifestations, not theoretically predetermined.⁹

Within this expanded frame, which extends from 1941 to 2003, I aim to delineate the place of *It's All True* within Orson Welles's broader film oeuvre, along with its complex and instructive ties to deep changes occurring within film industries, documentary discourse, and national societies in the Americas during and immediately following World War II. In particular, the negotiations surrounding the film shoot and the actions that brought about its abrupt discontinuation bear the potential for illuminating important aspects of international film policy during the war and the directions taken by hemispheric film culture in the postwar period, a period marked by an increasing divergence—punctuated by whimsical moments of intersection—between "big" commercial cinemas geared for export and bohemian "art" cinemas that transcended industrial confines. (This was the case in the hemisphere until the 1960s, when Hollywood began to search for alternative markets and alternately, the concept of a film industry was joined to the project of the Cuban revolution.)

Inevitably, and given Welles's reputation as one of the most celebrated

film auteurs of the last century, the attempt to locate *It's All True* within this changing context for film practice prompts anew the question of authorship: did *It's All True* leave a mark on his later films? How does Welles's application of documentary compare with that of others during World War II? On another level, the film's coproduction by RKO Radio Studio and the OCIAA raises additional questions regarding the role of the U.S. state in shaping the public profile, if not inner workings, of Hollywood cinema during the war (*It's All True* was slated for commercial release.) The enduring tension within this project among various poles of historical influence, cultural valuation, and political agency (against the inexorable backdrop of Hollywood's global hegemony) underscores the need to understand Welles's authorial positioning, on-screen and offscreen, toward the logistical and discursive functioning of film industries (including those of Brazil and Mexico) as well as the U.S. state. During the war the latter pursued a transnational cultural project as intensively as it undertook military operations and oversaw "national security." These working relationships increase in significance when one recalls that, at the energetic age of twenty-seven, Orson Welles was a media personality at the height of his public power, a stature that was enhanced by his work in radio and was symbiotically intertwined with his direct involvement in national and, through *It's All True*, international politics.

Equally important to mapping the film's history and its cultural impact is the task of assisting with its preservation so as to make its actual contents more accessible to the public. Although roughly 52,000 feet of nitrate negative pertaining to the three shot episodes have been preserved on safety negative (acetate and polyester), nearly 145,000 feet await preservation in the vaults at the UCLA Film and Television Archive.¹⁰ As Vincent Pinel of the Cinémathèque Française has reminded us, many source materials used in current film restorations are of dubious, unstable, or multiple origins, which calls for more, not less, conscientious efforts to find the best possible "original."¹¹ Even so, the suspension of *It's All True* in 1942, together with the international reach of its production and the stigmas generated by its critical dismissal, have complicated and discouraged the retrieval of evidence necessary to its formal and narrative reconstruction. I have chosen to take the film's circumstantial "deficiencies" as a work (its lingering material fragmentation and uneven fate in studio vaults), its enduring power as a Wellesian and pan-American "myth," and its shadowy complexity as a tool of diplomacy as fruitful points of departure for mapping and interpreting its history.

THE "TROUBLE" WITH *IT'S ALL TRUE*

A key ontological trait is that, unlike many films that have been restored and rereleased over the past two decades (Abel Gance's *Napoleon*, 1927/1981;

David Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia*, 1962/1988; and Welles's own *Macbeth*, 1948/1950/1989, and *Touch of Evil*, 1958/1998), the footage to *It's All True* was never fully shot or edited by its original makers. The previously mentioned *Greed* was fashioned into a full-length narrative film by Erich von Stroheim prior to being trimmed down by the studio, allowing a realistic attempt at retrieving the original version. Even Sergei Eisenstein's *¡Que Viva Mexico!*—which was suspended during shooting in Mexico in 1932—survived in various hypothetical and abbreviated versions after the negative was developed and printed in Los Angeles, then stored at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. In contradistinction to these other examples, there is still no stable material referent, however partial or provisional, on which to base a textual reconstruction of *It's All True* as an *integral* work. The 1993 assemblage of portions of footage into a feature-length documentary offers only a preliminary basis for interpretation, since it represents but one possible (if carefully conceived) sequencing of shots for isolated scenes from the “My Friend Bonito” and “Carnaval” episodes, along with a plausible rendering of sequences built from unedited rushes of “Jangadeiros.” A different textual rendering results from the articulation of the various episodes (including those that did not make it into production) into a multipart narrative structure, as I attempt in chapter 2, or alternatively, from the “sense” given to the surviving footage within entirely new narrative frameworks as in the pirated versions of and homages to *It's All True* discussed in chapter 7.

As it stands, the original film currently lacks what film theorists call “suture,” or the kind of intratextual articulations that permit the viewer to secure a position from which to decode the narrative contents, while concealing the initial site of those articulations, an activity that, under normal circumstances, allows the cinema to work as ideology, as well as give the appearance of textual “wholeness.”¹² Rather than view the lack of suture (a theoretical possibility that has been indefinitely deferred) and the larger problem of the lack of structural definition through editing as handicaps, I use them in the textual reconstruction undertaken in chapters 2, 4, and 5 as a *vehicle* for gaining easier access to the *process* of scene and shot articulation (in which Welles was involved during all phases of the film's shooting) and to the glimmerings of a positioning within cinematic discourse (style, genre), as well as ideological statements regarding the social world of the protagonists and the directions to be taken by inter-American relations. Poised for editing by *anyone* today, the pre-sutured elements can thus lead the way back to the initial moments of filmic construction—the moment that settings, actors' roles, and shots were chosen and recorded on film—so as to get at the perspectives and plans governing the film at the time of suspension. As a result, I place less emphasis on the hypothetical effects of the film on the spectator (as inscribed in the text and differentiated along social and geocultural lines) than on how the struggles and achievements of the filmmaker might have appeared

to various communities while making the film. This does not mean abandoning an exploration of the film's "reception," broadly defined; on the contrary, a form of reception began at the shooting locations, as it does for any public filmmaking enterprise (such as Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*, which became a local media event during shooting in the Philippines in 1976–77, prior to its 1979 release). This is especially the case for a culturally or socially "open" shoot engaging nonprofessionals, and joined to an act of international diplomacy, as was the case for *It's All True*.

The gaps between spurts of interest in salvaging *It's All True* and the timing of its suspension have fed uncertainties as to the film's structural parameters (would it have consisted of three or four episodes, and in what order of presentation?), as well as over the probable syntagmatic arrangement of the footage that has been unearthed (there is no "director's cut" to be found). These doubts have detracted from the memory of the text, and an appreciation that would lead to steps to preserve and reconstruct it. Meanwhile, as the film object slipped into oblivion, its symbolic power, whether positively or negatively valued, increased, while concrete evidence of its truncated trajectory—like meteorite from a meteor—began to resurface in the drifting sands of postwar development, trade, and migration. Today, the mention of *It's All True* in the literature on Welles conjures forth potent causal associations, mostly involving his strained relationship with the Hollywood film industry, where the film is cited as a contributing factor to an irreversible "downturn" in his film career, beginning in 1942.¹³ Since the mideighties, meaningful associations of a more personal and benign cast have been rekindled as those who collaborated with Welles on *It's All True* in the early forties joined together to retrieve what was a unique creative experiment at a pivotal moment in hemispheric history. Some of these collaborators—such as the late Richard and Elizabeth Wilson, George Fanto, Shifra Haran, and Brazilians Herivelto Martins, Grande Othelo, Pery Ribeiro, Abigail Mauricio Horta, Aloysio Pinto, and Chico de Albuquerque—helped pave the way for the 1993 documentary reconstruction, and their testimonies in oral form are cited in this book.

Many accounts of Welles's career have focused on the alleged effects of his filming expedition on the troubled fate of the more critically recognized *Magnificent Ambersons*, theatrically released in mid-1942. Portions of the latter film were either cut or reshot at the orders of RKO management while Welles was still in Brazil. Few observers have reversed the logic to consider whether Welles's difficulties with the studio over *The Magnificent Ambersons* might have had a negative impact on his ability to complete *It's All True*—although, as I argue in my dissection of *It's All True's* demise in chapter 6, this was only one of the factors behind the film's suspension, and it begs the sixty-year-old question of whether or not a Wellesian approach to filmmak-

ing was fundamentally compatible with studio protocols and policies, especially during a time of crisis, such as the war. My aim is less to “prove” any one of these causes than to unearth and weigh the significance of the multiple factors that impeded Welles’s ability to secure control over the fate of the film. In the process, I hope to shed light on the rhetorical and practical mechanisms whereby certain off-screen events have been used to rekindle the *auteur terrible* legend that for years has enveloped Mr. Welles’s persona.

In contrast to existing accounts, I argue that the impediments to *It’s All True*’s completion are to be found not only within the compass of the director-studio relationship, but also in each of the national contexts in which the film was produced. Taking inspiration from Welles’s pan-American project, I have designed this study to be cross-cultural in both method and perspective, drawing from sources located in the Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking, as well as English- and French-speaking, worlds (although the scholarship on Orson Welles reaches well beyond these confines into Africa, Asia, and other parts of Europe). In fact, the first scholarly reference to *It’s All True* appeared in a book published in Buenos Aires in 1945, and two of the most extensive and reliable sources of information on the film in print prior to Welles’s death were a newspaper column by Brazilian film historian Paulo Emilio Salles Gomes, published in *O Estado de São Paulo* (1958), and a historical overview of Brazilian cinema by Brazilian film critic Paulo Antônio Paranaguá, published in French (1979).¹⁴ These sources offer qualitatively different perspectives on *It’s All True*’s contributions as an artistic and political project, while providing valuable insights into its place within the flow of international film history. This “other” historiography reminds us of the degree to which scholarly and critical understanding of the cinema has been stunted by the timeworn blinders of Euro-Americocentrism, which for so long have shaped our assumptions concerning cinematic invention, innovation, and diffusion, as well as the criteria with which we discern and evaluate the aesthetics of the medium. The remedy is not a question of simply “adding on” to terrain that has already been trodden and demarcated, but rather of identifying important areas of artistic cross-fertilization between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, as well as alternative forms of cinematic cosmopolitanism. In making *It’s All True* after the international release of *Citizen Kane*, Welles can be seen as actively broadening the dialogue on film culture.

A final patch of historical opacity and heuristic challenge concerns the broader wartime history to which *It’s All True* belongs. Several cultural histories of World War II have noted the manufacture by the U.S. as well as Axis film industries of “hard” propaganda and the enlistment of U.S. filmmakers in military service, including the stationing of several on the Pacific and North Atlantic battlefronts, where some, like John Ford and William Wyler, respectively, wielded 16mm cameras instead of combat weapons. Yet,

notwithstanding the intensive orientation of cultural and political strategy to the north-south axis, in addition to the transatlantic and Pacific arenas—and the pivotal role played by a sophisticated agency such as the OCIAA in this orientation—minimal attention has been given to the “soft” studio-produced propaganda directed at the Americas, or to filmmakers and actors who, like Orson Welles, were dispatched southward for the purpose of courting or rekindling closer relations with Latin American governments and film communities. Walt Disney stands as the neon-lit exception, in part due to the promotional efforts and lasting visibility of the Disney studio itself.¹⁵ Such expeditions had a palpable effect not only on the shape taken by inter-American relations and the U.S. film industry itself, but also on the filmmakers’ work: Norman Foster, who shot “My Friend Bonito” for Welles in Mexico, went on to make several highly respected features inside the Mexican film industry, including the bullfighting melodrama *La Hora de la Verdad* (*The Moment of Truth*, 1945), starring Ricardo Montalbán; and it is rumored in Brazil that after his 1943 Good Neighbor visit with director John Ford, Gregg Toland, cinematographer for *Citizen Kane*, purchased property and had intentions of moving to Brazil after the war. These blind spots should come as little surprise to the general historian: until very recently, most English-language histories of World War II have not accorded nearly the same strategic importance to Latin America as they have to Europe and Asia.¹⁶

From several angles, then, *It’s All True* comes to us as the “trash of history,” a phrase used by Walter Benjamin to refer to cultural artifacts and social practices that have been discarded or actively suppressed, or that have fallen into disuse owing to modern change, yet leave behind material traces. Benjamin was interested in how this “trash” (not to be confused with Braudel’s “unconscious history”) can, through its very obsolescence, reveal hidden aspects of the new trends that displaced it, along with their conditions of emergence, even as we are brought back in “flashes,” through acts of remembrance or bold curiosity, to the world of which the trash was a part.¹⁷ Almost as if in conscious resistance to such a return for *It’s All True*, in later years Welles disavowed and diminished the personal and historical significance of the film and occasionally embroidered on the production event (mainly in the *Orson Welles’ Sketchbook* series broadcast by the BBC in 1955) just to make a good story. Doubtless, these “horse’s mouth” commentaries have fueled critical and industry skepticism concerning the textual viability of *It’s All True* and left the erroneous impression that Welles was content to “disown” the project. In chapters 4 and 7, I proffer an alternate reading of Welles’s stance (taking my cue from the epigraph to this book) by demonstrating the film’s organic connections to Welles’s later films, as well as its cultural impact in spite of its apparent abandonment and obsolescence. What can *It’s All True* tell us, not only about its contemporary context of construction, but also

about the historical processes that subsequently engulfed and scattered its meaning?

WHY *IT'S ALL TRUE*?

Beyond the utility of *It's All True* as a "refractory surface" for understanding its historical moments of appearance, disruption, and revaluation, what substantive attributes urge a renewed investigation of its murky history and delicate, sprawling remains? Much of the film's historical force derives from its positioning near the start of Welles's film career in Hollywood, its documentary orientation at a time of profound social transformation in the Americas, and its international and cross-cultural design. The last reflects not only the film's development within the framework of the Good Neighbor Policy, inaugurated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933 and endowed with greater political and economic clout during World War II, but also Welles's willingness to project his artistic interests beyond national borders, a projection that would take on new geocultural dimensions following his departure for Europe in 1947. *It's All True* also commanded the largest allocation—\$300,000—by the OCIAA for a single studio-made film to date,¹⁸ which leads one to ask what kinds of expectations and pressures were brought to bear that, while they might not have been shared by all government-sponsored Good Neighbor films, might help to illuminate both Welles's contemporary cultural "capital" as a U.S. film director and the nature of government–film industry cooperation at the initiative of the OCIAA's Motion Picture Division (MPD)—a form of cooperation and collaboration that has yet to be repeated in the history of U.S. cinema.

Yet *It's All True* was never a "typical" film, even when one is willing to overlook its state of incompleteness. Tom Gunning has suggested that the historical and theoretical value of an individual film text—along with its analytic potential for exposing some of the tensions between film history and film theory—resides in the specific, concrete ways whereby it encompasses competing discourses, thereby yielding insight into broader sociohistorical and aesthetic trends affecting film construction as well as spectatorship.¹⁹ At the microlevel of historical analysis, *It's All True* marks Welles's first attempt, shortly after shooting two features in a studio, to adopt documentary techniques while shooting on location. As such, it was a technically ambitious project, prompting the first use of 35mm Technicolor stock together with sound recording equipment in a feature film shot outside of the continental United States—a practice that would not become common in Hollywood filmmaking until the 1950s. In this way, Welles explored the possibilities of ethnographic and social-movement filmmaking during a period of intense state building and the diffusion of war propaganda. What were the aesthetic consequences of using Technicolor in a documentary at this time, as com-

pared say, with Walt Disney's smaller-scale efforts that were bolstered heftily by animation footage? What models did Welles draw upon to make a film that would have aesthetic appeal, while effectively addressing official, local, and personal sociopolitical concerns?

On paper and in actual practice, *It's All True* was programmatically designed by Welles to encourage civic unity and intercultural understanding at a time of Axis aggression, racial intolerance, and labor unrest at key sites in the hemisphere.²⁰ There was no clear-cut paradigm within which to balance these concerns at the time, even within the apparently more permissive realm (because of cultural relativism or, in Latin America, the absence of a "production code") of inter-American cinema. Rather, Welles appears to have applied the broadly framed OCIAA-MPD mandate to U.S. producers as best he could, while drawing from a range of aesthetic influences, from documentary to fictional genres, past and present, to portray actual events, great and small, in a manner that he felt would appeal to the popular and critical audiences he encountered during his travels. This interface between a political and cultural mandate and its cinematic interpretation by filmmakers working in different production circumstances is precisely at the root of much of the discursive mixing and fissuring in Good Neighbor cinema as a whole.

A HISTORICAL FRAME

Launched by Nelson Rockefeller in August 1940, the OCIAA was one of a few federal agencies active in furthering the Allied cause prior to the official entry of the United States into World War II. The OCIAA was not, as has been frequently stated in other accounts, a subsection of the U.S. State Department but was separately created by order of the U.S. Council of National Defense, and it operated with government funds and volunteer assistance from the U.S. business community.²¹ The agency's principal mandate, articulated within the framework of Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy, was to improve hemispheric solidarity so as to stem the tide of Nazi economic and ideological (and, later, military) incursions into Latin America while increasing the flow of trade—economic and cultural—along a north-south axis. The main Axis, and especially German Nazi, target was not just the natural resources that could fuel fascist war machinery but the United States in symbol and in substance, which, heavily armed, technologically sophisticated, and actively invoking the 1823 Monroe Doctrine of nonintervention in hemispheric affairs, stood in the way of Axis expansion into the region.²²

As a modern medium of communication that, by the end of the war, would reach a weekly domestic U.S. audience of ninety million, or almost three-quarters of its estimated national potential,²³ the cinema came to play a vital role as both an optimum instrument for recording history in the making

(given the new portability allowed by the use of 16mm cameras and projectors, along with faster film stock) and as a vital means of representing two competing models of development—one fascist, the other capitalist and democratic—to a socially and ideologically diverse audience: those already convinced of the need to support the Allied cause, yet in need of reassurance; those who remained isolationist or actively opposed; and marginal populations who had yet to be brought within the range of hemispheric communications and national progress. In the United States, the Army Pictorial Division of the U.S. Signal Corps, the Office of War Information (OWI) Motion Picture Bureau, formed in 1942, and the OCIAA's Motion Picture Division (MPD), all began to invest heavily in films documenting the war and orienting hemispheric audiences in favor of the Allied forces after the United States entered the conflict in December 1941.²⁴

For its part, the Hollywood industry, partly out of ideological sympathy for the war effort and partly out of a concern with boosting audience attendance for its product in Latin America, pledged to make films for the U.S. government on a nonprofit basis and incorporated Latin American themes and performers into its commercial fare.²⁵ During the thirties, efforts by the film industry to follow the government's Good Neighbor cue and invest in films set in Latin America (with the requisite stock footage for matte process shots), as well as in Latin American and Latina/o talent and themes, had not always yielded favorable results with Latin American governments, even after the enforcement of the Production Code in 1934, which discouraged ethnically based humor and caricature. On more than one occasion, changes in characters' national identities and geographic settings, even the deletion of shots or sequences, had been made by Hollywood producers and screenwriters to appease such protests, especially those voiced by the Mexican government under President Lázaro Cárdenas.²⁶ By 1939, however, once it became clear that crucial Western European markets and facilities were being lost to the Axis, the U.S. film industry intensified its courtship of Latin American film markets and its use of fledgling industrial installations.²⁷ According to both Thomas Guback and Ruth Vasey, prior to World War II, fully one-third of the Hollywood studios' revenue had been derived from foreign sources,²⁸ meaning that this diversion of attention southward was vital to the stability and profitability of the industry. Hence, there was a pressing need during the war to bring in new film talent with new international appeal and innovative ideas, to serve as a live conduit between the film and related culture industries in the North (namely, Broadway, radio, and the recording industry) and their southern counterparts, in cooperation with the governmental bodies that intervened in the flow of films and communications in the South.

Positioned at the center of the flurry of cultural and educational initiatives that flowed across national borders during the war, the MPD developed

a multipronged approach to bringing about qualitative changes in U.S. and hemispheric cinematic culture that included the production and distribution of propaganda shorts headquartered in New York's Museum of Modern Art, the exportation of film projection equipment to Latin America, technical assistance to the Mexican film industry, and training programs for Latin American film professionals, in addition to vetting the content of Hollywood features for Latin distribution. This diversification of policy is indicative of the extent to which pan-Americanism under the Good Neighbor Policy was more than just an official, transitory umbrella for the business of specialized agencies and expanding sectors of U.S. industry and commerce—or, the exclusive concern of inner power circles. Rather, it was honed into a persistent focal point, if not obsession, within public consciousness by way of academic and popular discourse. In the early years of World War II, to be “pan-American-minded” was to be a “good” American in the broader, regional sense of the term. Inter-American relations at all levels of engagement became the frequent subject of feature articles, radio shows, and advertisements, from shipping services to high fashion, disseminated by U.S. news publications (such as the *New York Times* and *Time* and *Life* magazines) and radio networks (especially CBS and NBC). Bilingual journals published in the United States, such as the *Inter-American Quarterly* (through 1941) and the *Inter-American Monthly* (from 1941 to the end of the war), covered Latin American industry and politics on a country-by-country basis for both North American and Latin American readers. The percolation of pan-Americanism in the U.S. public sphere was complemented by a spate of art exhibits, musical and theatrical performances, and diplomatic exchanges of journalists and artists extending from the United States to the Southern Cone, many of which were designed, organized, and promoted by the OCIAA in consultation with representatives of cultural institutions and industries in other American nations.

These conjunctural elements—Axis aggression through propaganda, hemispheric trade as an economic imperative for both state and industry, and the wielding of state authority in the transnational flow and consumption of modern culture (mass, popular, and avant-garde)—had concrete implications for any explicit attempt to render Good Neighbor relations on film. However, the conjunction of such elements had special consequences for a highly publicized transcultural endeavor fueled by grassroots narratives and spearheaded by a maverick director such as Orson Welles. I use the term *transcultural* to refer both to the crossing and “defying” of cultural boundaries, discussed by David MacDougall in relation to ethnographic films,²⁹ and to the *process* of transculturation, which, according to William Rowe and Vivian Schelling, has its conceptual origin in anthropology and was introduced to the field of cultural criticism principally by literary scholar Angel Rama. The latter usage has more pertinent implications for Welles's project,

since it designates the “mutual transformation of cultures, in particular the European by the native,” as one of several possible outcomes resulting from the conquest of the hemisphere in the late fifteenth century (or, one could say, the Latin American by the North American, as a result of the Good Neighbor Policy). Moreover, Rowe and Schelling use the concept to “counter critically the assumption that acculturation is the only long-term possibility for Latin America.”³⁰ Alternatively, one could substitute for “acculturation,” the modernist notion of *mestizaje*, ushered in alongside the survival of cultural elitism and paternalism in the early twentieth century. Broadly defined as the fusion of European and indigenous cultures as well as racial miscegenation, *mestizaje* was politicized first by a group of Mexican artists and intellectuals, the Ateneo de la Juventud (formed in 1909), then introduced as a measure of, and key to, national progress by José Vasconcelos, minister of public education (1921–29), in the effort to redefine Mexican national identity according to a culturally relativist, rather than positivist, model.³¹ As the cinema based on *mestizaje* reveals, however, in the absence of a consideration of postcolonial power differentials between ethnic groupings, Iberian-rooted culture and protagonists tend to retain their narrative authority while indigenous and mestizo characters and symbols, albeit fetishized or romanticized, are relegated to subaltern status. How and to what extent Welles’s film was transcultural, and thus transgressed existing models of cultural interaction, will be discussed in chapters 2, 5, and 6.

Some of the film’s documentary methods, combined with its thematic inscription of progressive New Deal concerns over workers’ rights and racial equality (indeed, the very idea that film is a public art form eminently suitable to the transmission of such ideologies) can easily be traced to Welles’s increasing involvement in national politics, as well as his close contact with alternative artistic communities from the midthirties to the early forties. These ranged from the Group Theatre and the Federal Theatre Project, along with Harlem jazz and modern (or “New”) music circles in New York City, to documentary film culture in New York, to a small network of innovative, realist filmmakers in Hollywood and progressive artists and intellectuals in Mexico.³² Other strategies speak to Welles’s self-acknowledged debt to a previous generation of realist directors, especially F. W. Murnau, King Vidor, Jean Renoir, and Robert Flaherty.

Today, in the light of a new “moment of legibility” (to quote Walter Benjamin) prompted by the rediscovery of the original footage and efforts at *It’s All True’s* reconstruction—and by reading deeply along the flow of its history and thematic contours—the film urges a reconsideration of the *socio-political* rather than behavioral foundations of Orson Welles’s troubled relationship to the studio system, as well as the larger discursive and ideological tensions residing in the articulation of domestic and foreign relations during World War II under the Good Neighbor Policy. With the new pre-

mium placed on wooing Latin American markets, Hollywood cinema formed a prime site where such tensions were expressed and could be managed in a new regime of cultural hegemony. This caused Good Neighbor cinema to introduce new roles for U.S. Latinas/os and Latin Americans, even as it reiterated deeply ingrained (neo)colonialist patterns of inter-American representation (racialized and tropicalized portrayals of Latin Americans who interact with, yet can never fully blend into, the Anglo-American world). To adequately explore these questions, new findings regarding the textual dimensions of *It's All True* must be linked to the historical arc of its suspension, reappropriation, and invocation “in absentia” in the postwar period, a project that is simultaneously deconstructive and reconstructive in orientation.

A PRISMATIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPROACH

Given the general unreliability of the “facts” presented to date, along with the uneven treatment of the film and its historical context in the existing literature, I have cast the net as widely as possible to examine scattered primary evidence, from film footage to oral testimonies to archival records, in addition to analyzing the discursive treatment of the film in published accounts circulating in France, Brazil, Mexico, and the United States. Because there is no single, discrete “object” to be retrieved, and the relation of the film to its various historical contexts needs to be revisited and reconstituted rather than simply restored, more than one lens or frame of analysis is necessary to carry out an interpretation and critical synthesis of these sources. Thus, the multifaceted trajectory of the film as neglected material object, remembered and disseminated text, and pivotal event is charted along three overlapping strands of reconstruction. Each of these strands, together yielding interlocking facets as in a prism, entails a particular style of analysis and reconstruction, varying perspectives on the film as a material and discursive phenomenon, and a different assignation of parameters to the film’s history, some period bound, others transtemporal in scope. Considered theoretically as a “whole”—and this is imperative for the film’s preservation to proceed—the original project and legacy of *It's All True* will always be both less and more than a synoptic view through the prism can provide.

The first strand of reconstruction privileges a linear and sequential approach to film history and covers the film’s production in 1941–42 and efforts at its postproduction during the forties, followed by its shifting status over several decades in studio and archival vaults. Chapter 1 recounts the events linked to the film’s development up to its suspension in mid-1942. The beginning of chapter 3 proceeds from the suspension to Welles’s departure for Europe in 1947. Chapter 6 takes a second look at the causal factors behind the film’s suspension, and chapter 7 chronicles the different us-

ages made of the film once it was materially stored at RKO Radio Studio and thereafter. Each of these chapters casts the history of the film within the evolving context of inter-American relations and of national film industries and political cultures, North and South.

The second strand is devoted to *textual* retrieval and reconstruction, proceeding from the work in progress of *It's All True* as a set of ideas that gradually crystallized parallel to the production effort, both of which evolved in tandem with changes in the immediate historical and industrial context (chapter 2), through to its appropriation and invocation in films by Welles and others, and its material reconstruction in documentary form (chapter 7). Aspects of that reconstruction, as well as the unedited footage on reels presently stored at UCLA and Paramount, actively inform the task of critical and textual reconstruction. The text-as-trajectory emerges both *synchronically*, as the fragments are analytically reassembled as in an archaeological reconstitution into a provisional whole, and *diachronically*, as the cultural status and discursive profile of this "text" (in style, theme, and rhetoric) are observed to shift over time.

Strictly speaking, all that survives of the film "text" from the historical sequence of events located along the first strand are the adumbrations of an *envisioned* work, salvaged and extrapolated from what is left of the work in progress on paper, in oral testimony, and on celluloid; and the textual *impressions* generated by the comparison of that envisioned text with existing film practices and paradigms of cultural interaction. The first sketch of the film text, which I call an *endotext*, or text-in-the-making, requires the investigator's engagement with the primary remnants of the film, along with the authorial discourse and on-location activity of Orson Welles, and is arrived at by way of inductive reasoning. These steps are taken in chapters 2, 4, and 7. The thematic and multistylistic character of *It's All True* permits the tracing of authorial links in chapter 4, highlighting dimensions of Welles's film career and political life that have been neglected or underexamined in the critical literature, such as his fascination with the silent and early sound cinema produced by his realist precursors, his critique of autocratic and oligarchic power (especially fascism), his lifelong dedication to racial equality and civil liberties, and his exploration of the shifting boundary between documentary and fictional film. Chapter 7 provides insight into Welles's quoting of *It's All True* in later films.

An alternate textual sketch, or *exotext*, emerges from an examination of the film's strategies and apparent content at the time of its making in comparison with its contemporary cinematic intertext, colored by the ongoing "reception" of the film within its three production contexts (Mexico, Brazil, and the United States). The key components of this intertext, which speak to the discursive tensions within the film to the point of "fissuring," include social and ethnographic documentaries of the thirties that were on the wane

in the early forties, as well as Good Neighbor features and popular genre cinemas of Brazil and Mexico. This synthetic, deductive project begins in chapter 5 and is extended into the exploration of the film's suspension in chapter 6.

Traveling the boundary between endotext and exotext, and moving away from the film's initial moment of construction toward the cultural present, are the Latin American, and especially Brazilian, homages and cinematic "heirs" to *It's All True* explored in chapter 7. These alternative forms of resuscitation not only speak to the proximity of Welles's film practice at the time to the frequent exploration of the documentary-fiction boundary in modern Latin American cinema, but in several ways they have added support to the material preservation of the film by creating a discursive "nest" within which it can reenter the public light.

The third strand of reconstruction pursues the legends—the many, mostly imaginary disseminations that have been made of *It's All True* and its history in the critical literature and in cinematic essays and documentaries. A meta-critique of these written and audiovisual projections (and occasionally, appropriations) is carried out in chapters 3, 6, and 7. Chapter 3 focuses on the contemporary and subsequent responses to the film in the trade press and critical literature on Welles, with a view to building alternate paths of interpretation. In chapter 6, some of the textual projections and dismissals are correlated with political forces bearing on the film's fate in the forties, while chapter 7 maps the cinematic piratings of the footage, most of which have themselves become part of the buried history of postwar Hollywood. Rather than discard these various "versions" of the film as spurious or fanciful, I have preferred to read them symptomatically for clues to discursive sources of friction between Welles's *It's All True* and a much more deeply rooted, generically based practice of depicting the "foreign" and the "Latin" for U.S. popular audiences. As such, the piratings are indicative of the lasting institutional and rhetorical frameworks—predominantly Euro-Americocentric, "white" supremacist (at worst) or folklorizing (at best), and box office bound—that have governed the articulation of intersocial, interregional, and inter-American relations on U.S. film. The conclusion briefly considers how reconstructing *It's All True* can contribute to a new reading of Welles's filmography and career trajectory, as well as to a better understanding of the pan-American context for filmmaking and film distribution during and after World War II. An attempt is thus made to summarize its utility to an archaeological exposure, in the Foucauldian sense,³³ of the discursive turns and sources of rupture in Welles's own work, as well as the process whereby discourses on race, class, labor, modernity, political participation, and national sovereignty were prioritized and reconfigured within the framework of inter-American cooperation and representation.

Each of these strands constitutes what can be termed a historiographical

"plane (or series of levers) of approximation" to *It's All True*, the retrieval of which is presented as neither definitive nor absolute, just as, after a kaleidoscopic search, we, like the reporter Thompson, are unable to put our hands on an exact referent for "Rosebud" in *Citizen Kane*. Nevertheless, what we have learned about Kane in dialogical relation to his entourage and his moment in history has been most intriguing. In the case of *It's All True*, the chances of retrieval and of understanding are maximized by observing how the three strands are interdependent and mutually illuminating. As in *Citizen Kane*, the "prismatic," rather than linear and straightforwardly deductive, logic of reconstruction informs the sequence—only roughly chronological—in which the chapters are presented: a production history (chapters 1 and 3), a textual reconstruction (chapter 2), a metacritique of secondary and primary sources (chapter 3), the text's relationship to the authorial intertext (chapter 4), a critical evaluation of the film's politics and poetics as an experiment in cross-cultural and intercultural representation (chapter 5), an inquiry into its suspension and censorship (chapter 6), and its cinematic legacy (chapter 7). Alternately, the reader may choose, as in Argentine writer Julio Cortázar's episodic novel, *Rayuela* (*Hopscotch*, 1963),³⁴ to read the chapters according to their corresponding strand (1, 3, 6, 7 = event; 2, 4, 5, 7 = text; 3, 6, 7 = mythology) of reconstruction.

Although I draw from, and to some extent historico-critically refute, the claims of many of the posthumous biographies of Orson Welles,³⁵ this is not an effort to rewrite that biography so as to better reveal his deepest fears, flaws, and aspirations as a multitalented artist, business partner, son, husband, lover, or father. Nor am I *primarily* interested in reassessing (so as to vindicate or condemn) Welles's work as an artist and ideologue. It is my position that the judgment of human character, including its effect on one's professional career, is an exercise best left to the screenwriter, the actor, the friend, or colleague, rather than the film historian or critic. Thus, for the purposes of this book, I take strong exception to Barbara Leaming's observation that "[Orson Welles's] most fascinating and enigmatic creation may be himself."³⁶ As too many biographies of Welles have shown, a fascination with his motives, foibles, "near misses," and moments of transcendence can easily get in the way of an appreciation of the work itself and of its chances for cultural survival.

Nor is this a "case study" in the sense that *It's All True* is taken to typify his early work or a given phase or body of representation within North American cinema. Instead, all evidence points to the film's fundamental hybridity (both cultural and stylistic), marginality (it has been historically uprooted, and is discursively fissured),³⁷ and mutability (its lack of spatiotemporal fixity in textual and geocultural terms) owing to its mode of construction as well as its suspension at the crucial postproduction stage. Some of the methods employed for the first time in *It's All True* appear strengthened in Welles's

later work, as compared with his subsequent films in the forties. Even so, the film's precariousness in relation to its original historical conjuncture, and especially its *interstitial* positioning with respect to various national contexts of production and appreciation, *enhances* its potential for illuminating the political, cultural, and logistical challenges faced by other filmmakers engaged in shaping inter-American cinema during World War II. Perhaps too hastily, these other works have been taken to be representative of that conjuncture, without closely examining what has been given up, what has been embraced (with or without clenched teeth), and what internally collides as a result of political and discursive accommodation.

Thus, while the present investigation is redemptive in its aims, insofar as it strives for a *revaluation* as well as a reconstruction of its object, this redemption takes place with the full acknowledgment of that object's fragmentation and imperfection and the lack of Welles's own attention to it in later years.³⁸ It is my premise that much of the historical meaning of *It's All True*, and even the project's artistic and social value, can be discovered along the fault line of what has survived and what is missing, no matter how unseemly and perplexing the contours of that line might be. What follows, then, is an *engaged* historiographical exercise that reevaluates the film on cultural and aesthetic grounds at close range, without striving to achieve a seamless or cosmetic rendering of what will always remain an open-ended, fragmented work. By *cosmetic*, I am referring to the historiographical equivalent of the use of new technologies, especially digital technology, not only to restore a work to its "original" glow but also to compensate for, or even invent, what is missing, so as to produce what by current standards will be an immaculate and compelling version. As with most plastic-surgical revisions, such procedures tend to be more for show, and thus aesthetically awkward, than functional in any structural or narrative sense (an example might be the THX enhancement of the original sound track to George Lucas's *Star Wars* upon its rerelease in Digital Theatrical Systems—equipped theaters in 1999). More often than not, cosmetic restorations contribute by default, rather than by conscious intention, to postmodern forms of appropriation, a process that risks the maximum amount of discursive and historical slippage.³⁹

It is more productive for both the preservation and the historiographical construction of *It's All True* to acknowledge how, as with potsherds unearthed in an archaeological dig, the film's remains have been literally corroded by time, then scattered and rearranged by occasionally well-meaning, yet often indifferent efforts to put them to practical use. The film is an unapologetic reminder of how, as French historian Paul Veyne aptly described it, history involves an encounter with surviving "traces," which themselves have been adulterated or crippled with the passage of time; hence, it is "mutilated knowledge."⁴⁰ As paradoxical as it might seem, it is the act of embracing rather than glossing over these imperfections that permits the film's thorough reval-

uation and repair, because one is prompted to travel back to the moments of its making and its demise to see it anew. Using several speculative points of departure, one can then pursue the threads linking the "traces" to the less accessible realms of the film's past integrity and current potential.

Admittedly, a self-conscious deliberation over the ethics of historical retrieval and representation has informed the methodological approach of this book. Whereas a single individual can easily conceive of how, through plastic surgery, to push a mutilated work, *prima facie*, into a marketable object, the journey back to identify celluloid scenes, pursue their endotextual traces, and ascertain their role as parts of a projected whole can only be undertaken through collaborative effort and in silent dialogue with the filmmakers, which necessitates yielding a sense of "total control" over one's evidence. Concomitantly, a place is carved out in this book for the film *work* itself, and for the various communities involved in its making and preservation, without denying the distinctive role played by Welles in its conception, elaboration, and historical fate and impact. Even the sharpest interrogations of an author's primordial claim to the shape and meanings of a text tend to reserve a dynamic space, albeit a marginal or "negative" one, for the author.⁴¹ Although I construe the author-text relationship differently in each chapter, it is a connective thread that runs through the book as a whole. What is crucial is that the authorial contribution to the film and its history not be considered in isolation from, or in excessively privileged relationship to, that of other historical agents and collaborators, so that the productive tensions between text and context can be kept stage center.

In traversing national and social borders, Welles's film project also traversed distinct domains of cultural expression, knowledge production, and modes of memory transmission, of which written prose has been only one small part. I am referring to the unspoken boundaries that continue to demarcate experiential and orally transmitted knowledge from academic or journalistic (institutional) discourse, and vernacular and artisanal cultural expression from industrial and commercial forms (although the latter set of boundaries are rapidly disappearing). Any comprehensive approach to locating primary sources on *It's All True* necessitates the translation and transfer of findings from one discursive domain to another. Moreover, since the early forties, few "facts" within any of these domains of documentation and narration have survived in a "pure" or distilled form: They have often been intertwined or juxtaposed with other types of facts and thus have required a careful, conscious decision to privilege or include one source rather than another. (This is, of course, what Dominick LaCapra refers to as the historian's "dialogue" with her sources.)

Throughout this book, I have converted the "other" sources—field interviews conducted with film participants and witnesses, contemporary journalistic accounts, and direct encounters with places and objects—into the



Figure 1. Pages from Raimundo “Tatá” Correia Lima’s scrapbook, 1941–1942. Courtesy Dona Celsa Gomes de Lima. Photograph by the author.

representational terms and language of academic inquiry. Yet I have also included visual and verbal samples of primary sources (see especially appendix 1) because, as labor historian Daniel James has observed, the “form” of oral history is as significant as its content. Through oral forms of transmission, we are able to grasp not only the extent of the impact of a historical event, such as the local repercussions of the filming of *It’s All True*, but also the complexity of the historical actions that contributed to it, and the occasionally contradictory and often idiosyncratic paths taken by its popular reception as an unfinished work.⁴² These primary, richly semantic sources are not only accessorial to the film’s retrieval; they constitute a key site of its material and discursive survival, bridging the gap between knowing and not knowing, between being able to look and never having seen. Moreover, as oral historian Paul Thompson has asserted, oral testimony is less mediated than newspaper accounts or statistical renderings, which are no less prone than the former to representing the “social perception of facts” together with the sought-after facts; and that methods exist for testing the reliability of oral sources,⁴³ some of which might not be available to the evaluation of printed sources—such as a random shipping document from the Brazilian Arquivo Nacional, which does not bear the marks of an “author” or of the precise contents of the footage sent back to Hollywood in 1942.

During my first trip, in August 1989, to Fortaleza, Brazil, where Welles had shot “Jangadeiros,” I visited Dona Celsa Gomes de Lima, widow of *jangadeiro* (raftsman) Raimundo “Tatá” Correia Lima, at the house where he had lived from the early forties until his natural death in the early sixties. In the course of sharing her husband’s recollections of the filming of *It’s All True*, Dona Celsa brought out a tattered album (see fig. 1). It contained a collage of news clippings and photographs that had been compiled by two young women and given to Tatá as a memento upon his return from both voyages, the 1941 raft expedition and its filmed reenactment in 1942. To fill the spaces left by the odd contour of the articles on each page, the women had pasted poems, aphorisms, and sundry news items. While apparently unrelated to the content of the feature articles, these adornments provided a serendipitous rendering of the “spirit of the moment” (or what Raymond Williams would call a “structure of feeling”), yielding a contemporary, if tenuous, position from which to decipher the journalistic commentary on the two voyages to Rio. In a similar fashion, the anecdotal detours taken in oral testimony to relate occurrences of equal or greater emotional significance than the objective “facts” of the film provided a sense of both the role played by *It’s All True* in the variegated universe of its participants and the degree to which Welles was capable of inscribing meaningful aspects of that universe from the standpoint of the participants, rather than from that of film or diplomatic history. As such, the digressions provided a means of mediating the social distance between present and past, and between the interviewees and myself as a sympathetic detective.

Taking the homegrown preservationist gesture of these women as my cue, I have compiled a “research scrapbook” of photographs and dialogues conducted in the field, samples of which appear interspersed through the book’s chapters. Like oral history, the scrapbook is an unabashedly selective mode of recollection, inflected by subjective judgment, in which events appear punctuated or oddly juxtaposed. It is intended as a means of inscribing the process of investigation into the writing of history, of acknowledging the terms of the transaction between investigator and informant (whether formulated along the metacritical lines proposed by cultural theorists such as James Clifford, or as a narratological practice by anthropologists such as Ruth Behar).⁴⁴ It also highlights the indispensability of the contributions of these individuals and communities to our knowledge of the fledgling *It’s All True* and to the memory of its cultural and political moment, now and in years to come.

Chapter 1

In Production, 1941–1942

The question of creative origins is often subject to debate in a collaborative, sequential art form such as the cinema—perhaps never more provocatively than in the case of *It's All True*, which was produced within multiple institutional frameworks and experienced many thematic and strategic changes over the course of its development. Some of the residual cloudiness surrounding the film's emergence and progress can be attributed to a four-part structure that sparked parallel and intermittent lines of development, never creatively joined or fulfilled in a finished work. More broadly, one can point to director Orson Welles's professional mode of operation. He tended to work on several projects in different media simultaneously—radio, theater, film, and television—and delivered (at times deliberately) discrepant versions of his life and career to his fans and critics.¹ In addition to improvising on the set, using scripts only as rough guidelines, Welles had a propensity for recycling his own choreographic and compositional ideas, visual rhetoric, and plot elements from one project or medium of expression to the next. And he delighted in the art of adaptation, a skill that periodically attracted critical controversy, giving new meaning and form to texts authored by others while remaining faithful to the spirit and historical roots of the original work.²

It's All True poses no notable exception to this pattern, and although the director's recuperative impulse ultimately ensured the film's discursive survival (a subject to be explored in chapter 7), it has also complicated the task of historical retrieval by creating a palimpsest of assertions and rhetorical constructs by Welles and others that must be second-guessed and occasionally bracketed for the film event as corresponding text to come to light. This labyrinth is compounded by the practical challenges posed by the dispersion of the film's production across two continents (see maps 1 and 2), the nonfictional nature of its source material (no literary "classics" or easily ac-



Map 1. Shooting locations and settings in North America for *It's All True*, 1941, and Orson Welles's diplomatic itinerary, 1942, part I. Please note that borders of states and countries may have changed since 1941. Design by Thomas Cox. Portion adapted from Robert J. Flaherty, *The Captain's Chair, a Story of the North* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1938).

cessible publications are involved), the divergent agendas of the agencies that cosponsored and oversaw its production, and even its critical dismissal as a “failure.” All have had a centrifugal effect on the surviving evidence, necessitating continual cross-checking and comparison of written sources, along with a heavy reliance, where possible, on available press reports and oral testimony.

In taking a long view of the film’s history and using the archaeological approach described in the introduction, I attempt here to produce an account of *It’s All True* as an ongoing process of brainstorming, shooting, revision, and retrieval. This chronicle is intended less to provide “closure”—a formidable task in view of the many questions the film’s history continues to raise—than to serve as a “working overview” that can be used to set the parameters of textual reconstruction (along a synchronic axis) and illuminate the causes behind the film’s suspension (diachronic axis).³

Of special interest are the complex and shifting relations between Welles and Mercury Productions, their sponsoring organizations, and the project’s international observers, along with the periodic folding of culturally and stylistically diverse material into the basic four-part structure of the work in progress. In its earliest stages, the project that came to be known as *It’s All True* underwent a series of false starts and shifts in source material, prior to stabilizing into a geographically and culturally varied anthology of medium-length episodes. The initial idea of converting “true” stories (stories based on lived experience) into film narrative appears to have taken root around the time of the long-awaited release of *Citizen Kane* in early May 1941, when RKO began pressuring Welles’s Mercury Productions to develop additional projects for release during its busy 1941–42 season. One of Welles’s proposals was to make a film based on the life of populist Louisiana governor and senator Huey Long, who had used strong-arm politics to implement his progressive tax and social welfare policies, including ample funds for himself and cronies, prior to being assassinated in 1935. The screenplay was to be adapted from a book on the subject by *New Orleans Item-Tribune* reporter Harnett Kane, and Welles would be cast in the title role.⁴

A second proposal, provisionally titled “Lady Killer” or “Landru,” was to have been based on the life and crimes of Henri Landru, a notorious French serial killer and con artist who managed to extract a fortune from the estates of ten women he seduced and murdered between 1915 and 1919, when he was finally apprehended by the local police.⁵ Welles wished to collaborate on the project with Charles Chaplin, a social acquaintance of his, who had reportedly tried to recruit Welles for United Artists during the heat of the *Citizen Kane* controversy.⁶ According to Chaplin, Welles invited him to play the sinister widow murderer Landru and to cowrite the screenplay.⁷ Chaplin was busy with a project of his own at the time, a film adaptation of the Broadway play *Shadow and Substance*, and preferred not to become involved in shaping the Landru project from the ground up.⁸ Nonetheless, the story



Map 2. Shooting locations and settings in Central America and South America for *It's All True*, 1942, and Orson Welles's diplomatic itinerary, part II. Please note that borders of states and countries may have changed since 1942. Design by Thomas Cox.

intrigued him, and to Welles's consternation, Chaplin managed to purchase the film rights to the concept, which he reworked several years later into a dark comedy, retitled *Monsieur Verdoux* (1947). Chaplin starred in and directed this version, crediting Welles with the original story idea.⁹ (It was probably just as well that Welles relinquished the project, given the very limited distribution *Monsieur Verdoux* received and its U.S. boycott by religious and press organizations on moral grounds.)¹⁰

While waiting for *Citizen Kane* to be released, Welles had also been developing with Dolores del Río a film adaptation of Arthur Calder-Marshall's novel *The Way to Santiago* (1940), a political thriller about an American and a British journalist who uncover a plot by a Nazi secret agent to overthrow the democratically elected Mexican president, while investigating the clandestine trade of Mexican oil for German weapons being sold internationally to U.S. and European interests.¹¹ There are signs that Calder-Marshall's novel was based on actual events: Mexican artist Diego Rivera personally reported an incident very similar to the oil-smuggling operation in the novel, by way of *Hoy* newspaper in December 1939; a German ocean liner, the *Columbus*, was allegedly being used, along with two smaller boats, as a fuel ship for German submarines stationed in Mexican waters and was subsequently intercepted by British warships.¹² Like the novel, the film would have woven a fictional story into actual geographic settings, while making reference to contemporary political organizations and events. Welles's version, which was to be filmed on location in central and southeastern Mexico, has been commonly referred to as *Mexican Melodrama*, the generic working title of the screenplay (16mm footage shot during location scouting for this project, possibly by Welles himself in September 1941, can be found in the Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, at the University of Michigan).

These three projects, like *Citizen Kane*, take on the theme of excessive individual power and public deception, while incorporating the narrative viewpoint of the press or, at the very least, narrating history by way of journalistic discourse. None of them ever went into production for RKO. However, Welles would retain the idea for basing a film on "true stories," as well as shooting on location in Mexico, in *It's All True*.

RETURNING TO GRASS ROOTS: FROM JAZZ TO BULLFIGHTING

In early July 1941, while Duke Ellington was conducting and performing with his orchestra in the all-black musical revue, or "revu-sical," *Jump for Joy*, at the Mayan Theater in Los Angeles, Welles approached the musician with a proposal for a new project.¹³ He invited Ellington to compose and arrange the musical sound track for an episode of a film to be based on "true" stories: in this case, a history of jazz performance and its popular reception in

the twentieth century, inspired by and reflecting Louis Armstrong's life and musical career. Provisionally titled "The Story of Jazz," the episode was to provide a vehicle for formal and technical innovation of a musical sound track in relation to live action and animated imagery, as well as showcasing top African American jazz and blues talent.

It's All True soon became more than a brainstorming session shared between talented friends. The four episodes, including "The Story of Jazz," would become Welles's second film to go into production at RKO, just prior to *The Magnificent Ambersons*, which was to be produced under a separate contract, and preparations for casting and screenwriting were well under way by summer's end.¹⁴ In addition, Mercury was scheduled to produce two other projects that season for RKO: *Journey into Fear*, directed by Norman Foster (1943), and the discontinued *Mexican Melodrama*, directed by Welles. Ironically, RKO as sponsoring studio appeared to be the most interested in the latter two projects because they were both spy thrillers set during World War II and seemed on the surface to hold the most box office promise.¹⁵ Having recovered reasonably well financially from its Depression-linked reversals, since its reorganization and underwriting by Floyd Odum's Atlas Corporation in 1939, RKO was in the midst of an aggressive campaign to generate as many new releases as possible to service a growing domestic audience, as well as an expanding Latin American market, during the 1941–42 season. The studio held Mercury to task in this effort.¹⁶ For its part, in addition to developing new film projects for RKO, the semiautonomous Mercury Productions was preparing to launch *The Orson Welles Show* with its weekly *Almanac* series on the CBS radio network (September 1941–January 1942).¹⁷ It also produced a lengthy run of *Native Son* at New York venues, adapted for the stage by the author of the novel, Richard Wright, and Paul Green, and directed by Welles.¹⁸

At this point, Welles planned to shoot most of *It's All True* on the Pathé lot in Culver City under the terms of his existing three-film contract with RKO as director and producer, although the full extent of his participation both on-screen and offscreen remained unclear.¹⁹ The four-part film was to be about two and a half hours long, breaking the industry exhibition standard of the "double feature," and each of the episodes would be based on a "true" story, according to Welles, "not before exploited for films."²⁰ The multipart structure appears to have been a practical response to the recent proposal by producer David O. Selznick that feature-length films be divided into attention-getting "shorts" linked by a common theme. That same year, and just weeks before Welles's announcement of plans to make *It's All True*, Harry Brandt, president of the Independent Theater Owners Association, had openly challenged the film industry to take Selznick up on his proposal, expressing the conviction that "quality," not length, was the determining factor at the box office.²¹

The episodes, personally selected by Welles and adapted for the screen

by three different screenwriters, would investigate the meaning of modern American identity by portraying protagonists from a range of ethnic and social backgrounds in stories set at various locations in North America, broadly defined as a region extending from the Northern Arctic Territories to the Yucatán Peninsula. In addition to their detailed portrayal of American social life in the early twentieth century, the episodes would be linked by their thematic focus on the dignity of the working person.²² This theme was developed in relation to protagonists hailing from different geocultural communities; thus one finds within each episode the subtextual tenet of universal citizenship supported by national unity, premised on ethnic and cultural diversity, whether the “nation” being referenced was Canada, Mexico, or the United States. Gregg Toland—a cutting-edge cameraman, mentor to Welles, and key innovator of the visual aesthetics for *Citizen Kane*—was to be hired as cinematographer for the film.²³

The second episode slated for production, “The Story of Jazz,” alternately titled “Jam Session,” continued to develop as a short dramatization of jazz history. The original screenplay, written by jazz enthusiast Elliot Paul, was modeled closely on Louis Armstrong’s autobiography, *Swing That Music* (1936).²⁴ Duke Ellington was hired to supervise its screen adaptation for musical accuracy, in addition to his role as composer, arranger, and conductor of the musical sound track.²⁵ With Armstrong cast as himself, the episode also was to feature appearances by other prominent jazz and blues artists, such as Kid Ory, Joe Sullivan, Joe “King” Oliver, and Bessie Smith. This posthumous characterization would have been Smith’s second screen role, following her actual and only appearance as a down-and-out working woman in a musical short, *St. Louis Blues*, directed by Dudley Murphy for RKO in 1929. There was also a possibility that Ellington would have acted in the episode.²⁶

In the episode, short vignettes of Louis Armstrong’s life offstage were to be interspersed with filmed performances of compositions by King Oliver (“Dippermouth,” “Black Snake Blues”), Kid Ory (“Savoy Stomp”), and Armstrong himself (“Potato Head Blues,” cowritten with Lil’ Hardin Armstrong) at various venues, from a Mississippi riverboat to Chicago, New York, and Western Europe, all joined by Ellington’s original sound track.²⁷ Although many of the featured musicians were to have appeared as themselves, the crucial role of Lil’ Hardin, Armstrong’s second wife and fellow band member during the formative years of his career, was given to jazz pianist-singer Hazel Scott, a casting decision that elicited vociferous objections from Hardin (see fig. 2).²⁸

Studio shooting for “The Story of Jazz” was scheduled to begin in December 1941, and Duke Ellington reports having composed several bars for the original sound track; however, there is no evidence of any footage having been shot or of music having been recorded, and *It’s All True* would soon take another direction.²⁹ Armstrong is reported to have truly regretted the eventual cancellation of the project;³⁰ he was given only cameo parts in other



Figure 2. Louis Armstrong (*center*) in King Oliver's band, Chicago, ca. 1922. To Armstrong's left (*left to right*): Baby Dodds, H. Dutre, and J. "King" Oliver; to his right (*left to right*): Bill Johnson, J. Dodds, and Lil' Hardin, Armstrong's first wife. Courtesy Hogan Jazz Archive, Howard Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University.

films (he appears as a jazz-playing "devil" in MGM's *Cabin in the Sky*, dir. Vincente Minnelli, 1943) into the postwar period.

While still in its early stages of development, "The Story of Jazz" was joined to three other episodes that adopted the short-story format and were registered under the title *It's All True* on July 29, 1941. Mercury optioned the screen rights to two short stories published by Robert Flaherty: "The Captain's Chair," based on Flaherty's experiences while working as a young prospector for Sir William Mackenzie's Hudson Bay Company in northern Canada, and "Bonito, the Bull," relating the friendship of a mestizo (mixed indigenous/European heritage) boy and a young, fierce bull bred to fight in the ring in Mexico City. Budding screenwriter and novelist John Fante adapted the Bonito story for the screen with Norman Foster (who at that time had been working mainly as an actor at RKO). The two also collaborated on the script for the fourth episode, "Love Story," which narrated the courtship and marriage of Fante's Italian American parents, Nick Fante and Mary Capolungo, set in San Francisco (see fig. 3).



Figure 3. John Fante's father, Nicola Fante, with Mary (John's mother) and Rose Capolungo, ca. 1907. Courtesy Joyce H. Fante Trust (Victoria Fante Cohen).

Although it would have been the most streamlined of the episodes to produce, "Love Story" never progressed beyond the script stage, and no casting or other efforts at preproduction appear to have been done by Mercury.³¹ However, three of the scenes depicting the flirtation between the young bricklayer Rocco and his future fiancée Della in a "North Beach Amusement Park" have survived in condensed form in the considerably more dystopian "Crazy House Mirror" sequence at the end of Welles's *Lady from Shanghai* (Columbia, 1948).³² As in "The Story of Jazz," the characters in this episode were to speak in an accented, colloquial form of English, while their interaction with the built environment and socially diverse public sphere was indicative of a world undergoing modernization, in which the protagonists themselves were both active participants and bewildered observers.

Welles insisted on deriving all story material for *It's All True* from lived experience, and because he lacked direct contact with the events and protagonists of the Fante and Flaherty stories, he asked that both writers swear to

their stories' veracity in written affidavits.³³ Nevertheless, in a letter to his parents requesting their signatures, we find the following admission by John Fante: "All stories we do for Welles for this picture are supposed to be *true* stories. Well, my story of the Italian bricklayer isn't exactly true, but I had to tell them it was true in order to sell it."³⁴

Among other slight discrepancies between script and life story, Fante's parents had in fact met and settled in Denver, Colorado, not San Francisco. Similarly, the events depicted in at least one of the Flaherty stories had been considerably filtered and modified to suit Flaherty's thematic preferences, even before they reached Welles's hands to be adapted for the screen. Frequently in Flaherty's films (*Moana: A Romance of a Golden Age*, 1926; *Tabu: A Story of the South Seas*, 1931; *Man of Aran*, 1934; *Elephant Boy*, 1937), one finds an emphasis on family life, and especially on a young boy's coming-of-age as a means of translating the values and preoccupations of pristinely portrayed, traditional cultures into terms that could be readily understood by cultural "outsiders." However, the "Bonito" story, as Flaherty had found it in New Mexico, actually involved the growing bond between a bull trainer—not a boy—and a bull that is unanimously pardoned by the audience in the bullring for his bravery.

Mexican sources reveal that there *was* an incident in 1908 involving a bull named "Bonito" that was pardoned by spectators for his "exceptional nobility" when his caretaker Miguel Bello jumped into the ring at Mexico's Plaza El Toreo to bid him farewell, in anticipation of the final *estocada* (plunge of the sword into the bull's heart).³⁵ From there, the story became enmeshed with other tales of the friendship between humans and bulls within Mexican collective memory. For example, the 1908 incident probably inspired Lorenzo Barcelata's *corrido* "Toma Coquito," whose affectionate refrain, "Toma Coquito, toma, azucar te voya dar" (Here, Coquito, here, I'll give you sugar) is met with a fierce charge from a bull in the film *¡Ora Ponciano!* (dir. Gabriel Soria, 1936), which, like Welles's "My Friend Bonito," starred Mexican matador Jesús "Chucho" Solórzano in the lead role as bullfighter.³⁶

It remains unclear as to whether either Flaherty or the man who sold him the copyright in 1928 was ever aware of the original incident; in any case, Flaherty displaced the story's focalization onto the character of a mestizo boy, retaining the trainer "Miguel" as a supportive, paternal figure. In this way, the boy and the bull would grow up together and share the traumas of their passage into adulthood: for the bull, the inexorable voyage from the nurturing ranch to the bullring; for the boy, the loss of innocence, the initiation into the wider social sphere, and the awareness of death.³⁷

It has been claimed, based on contemporary reports made by Soviet director Sergei Eisenstein, that Flaherty himself once had intentions of producing "Bonito, the Bull" as a film and had traveled to Mexico in search of a suitable young actor for the part of Chico (while working for the Fox Film

Corporation on a film about the Acoma tribe in the state of New Mexico in mid-1928).³⁸ There are no signs, however, of Flaherty's production of "Bonito" ever having gotten under way. In any event, the historical circumstances surrounding the Mercury screen version were quite different from those Flaherty would have encountered. By 1941, Mexico had its own film industry, and relations between the Mexican and U.S. governments were improving as a result of the recently elected president Manuel Avila Camacho's conciliatory stance toward U.S. capital interests, after the wave of nationalization of Mexican infrastructure and industry implemented by former president Lázaro Cárdenas during the 1930s. Flaherty would have experienced relative freedom while on location, but to produce "My Friend Bonito," Mercury first needed to reach an agreement with the Mexican government, through RKO Studio, to shoot a film that would make use of Mexican actors and locations.

"The Captain's Chair," meanwhile, had undergone significant changes in focalization and narration as it developed from a magazine serial coauthored by Flaherty and John Chapman Hilder (1928–29) into a television play (for BBC, mid-1930s), and then a novel (1938).³⁹ Flaherty had also submitted a treatment, extracted from the serial story, to RKO for screen adaptation in 1929.⁴⁰ From the record, it is not clear exactly which one of these versions was optioned by Mercury Productions in mid-1941,⁴¹ although a number of factors point to the greater suitability of the novel, in form and in substance, to Welles's choice of themes and experimentation with modes of narration in *It's All True*.

In any event, the epic format and geographic and ethnographic detail of the novel suggest that it might have conformed more to Flaherty's original experience, as contrasted with the rudimentary character development and melodramatic overtones of the magazine story. The latter pivots around a violent power struggle between a director of the Hudson's Bay Company and a boat captain, paralleled by a budding romance between the captain's first mate and a young nurse aboard an icebreaker on its way from England to deliver supplies to trading posts in arctic Canada. In the novel, Flaherty (narrating in first person) and members of the Inuit nation struggle to survive at the northern end of Hudson Bay when a shipment from England of food and other vital necessities on a troubled icebreaker (piloted by the troubled captain) is mysteriously delayed (see map 1).

Of these four episodes, only "My Friend Bonito" actually went into production in September 1941, although shooting was tentatively scheduled for the other episodes later that year.⁴² Because of a time and location conflict with the shooting of *The Magnificent Ambersons* in Hollywood in late October, Welles dispatched Norman Foster, co-screenwriter for the "Bonito" episode, to direct the shoot on location at La Punta—the most prominent fierce-bull hacienda in Mexico at the time—and other bullfighting locations in central Mexico.

Welles's plans for using Flaherty's "My Friend Bonito" story had crystal-

lized in July 1941 when he met matador Chucho Solórzano, in Los Angeles, thanks to Dolores del Río. Solórzano agreed to star in the film; he would be joined by two other leading bullfighters from Mexico, Fermín “Armillita” Espinosa and Silverio Pérez. The cast also included Mexican film star Domingo Soler in the role of “Miguel,” the bull hand, and a young mestizo boy, Jesús “Hamlet” Vásquez Plata (from a village adjacent to La Punta) in the role of “Chico.” Shooting began in late September at La Punta, following a visit to that location by del Río and Welles (see fig. 4). Assisting Foster was a crew composed of José Noriega (a Spanish-language editor and adaptor from the editing department at RKO Radio Studio in Los Angeles), working as line producer and Spanish interpreter; Floyd Crosby as cinematographer; and Al Gilks as RKO camera operator. Crosby was a logical choice for this particular project, given his previous experience working with Robert Flaherty and F. W. Murnau on *Tabu: A Story of the South Seas*, in Tahiti, a film for which he had won the 1931 Academy Award for cinematography, as well as his documentary camera work on films by Pare Lorentz in the late thirties.⁴³ The crew received local support from the hacienda staff, especially from the vaqueros (cowhands) Ramón Macías and Pedro Chávez Lara, who, together with the bullfighters and picador El Güero Guadalupe, choreographed the bull herd for the camera.

Gilks was soon replaced by Canadian-born cinematographer Alex Phillips (né Alexander Pelepiock), who should be given at least partial credit for the Eisensteinian angles and deep-focus visual aesthetics of portions of the “Bonito” footage, especially considering the enduring aesthetic impact that Eisenstein’s Mexican project *¡Que Viva México!* (1931–32) exerted on Mexican cinematography during this period. Phillips had already wielded the camera in noted Mexican bullfighting melodramas, such as *Santa* (dir. Antonio Moreno, 1931) and *¡Ora Ponciano!*⁴⁴ He would go on to shoot historical dramas under Mexican directors Fernando de Fuentes, Antonio Momplet, Roberto Gavaldón, Emilio “El Indio” Fernández, and Julio Bracho during the Golden Age of Mexican cinema, in which he had a strong hand in building the brazen yet softened screen image of Dolores del Río’s only serious rival, Mexican diva María Félix.⁴⁵ Yet Phillips’s distinct stylistic touch in “My Friend Bonito” cannot be reduced to either an Eisensteinian legacy or the importation of Hollywood continuity techniques. The markedly realist visual style of films shot by Phillips in the early forties, such as *Ay Jalisco, ¡No Te Rajes!* (*Oh Jalisco, Don’t Back Down!* dir. Joselito Rodríguez, 1941), involving fluid long takes, the creation of tensions between background and foreground within shots, and the use of deep focus, is suggestive of his appropriateness to location work on a Welles project. (*Ay Jalisco* was shot in the summer of 1941, which allows for the possibility of stylistic influence from *Citizen Kane*, released that May in the United States.)⁴⁶ Phillips’s presence on the crew meant that Welles’s and Foster’s project benefited from the contributions of two Mexican nationals



Figure 4. Jesús and Carmen Solórzano (*center*) with the Madrazo family at La Punta hacienda, Jalisco, Mexico, 1941. Courtesy Orson Welles Manuscripts Collection, Lilly Library, Indiana University.

who had prior experience at rendering the culture of bullfighting for the screen, given Chucho Solórzano's previous role in *¡Ora Ponciano!*

As the lead bullfighter in "My Friend Bonito," Solórzano was to administer the *tientas* (tests of bravery) to bulls at La Punta, as well as perform in unrehearsed bullfights with twelve different bulls in double bills with the matador "Armillita" at the Plaza "El Toreo" of Mexico City. Traditionally, the *tientas* of male bulls are done just prior to branding (the rite of passage that marks them for the ring), while the testing of fierce cows is done prior to mating, to increase the chances of breeding fierce male offspring.⁴⁷ Additional bullfighting scenes were shot of the Peruvian-born *rejoneadora* (bullfighter on horseback) Conchita Cintrón (see figure 5).⁴⁸

Once the *tientas* of young bulls and fierce cows were completed in La Punta's open fields and "plaza" in early October 1941,⁴⁹ the crew turned to shooting additional cow *tientas*, featuring the popular bullfighter Silvério Pérez, as well as the yearly "blessing" of the animals by a Catholic priest near the Zacatepec ranch in Tlaxcala, on the occasion of Corpus Christi. This was



Figure 5. Conchita Cintrón performs a cow *tienta* in *Maravilla del Toreo*, dir. Raphael Sevilla, 1941. Courtesy Filmoteca de la Universidad Autónoma de México, Mexico City.

followed by the branding of bulls at the Atenco ranch; attempts at the impossible-to-shoot live birth of a bull at the ranch of Maximino Avila Camacho (brother of the Mexican president and compadre of Francisco Madrazo y García Granados, owner of La Punta) in Puebla;⁵⁰ and the Mexico City bullfighting sequences. Both Foster and Noriega communicated frequently with Welles regarding the day-to-day results of shooting and their plans for each scene. Even though the weather in central Mexico did not “cooperate” with the planned shooting schedule, being cloudier than usual, Welles was quite pleased with the qualitative results of Foster’s work—so much so that he offered him a “codirector” credit on the episode.⁵¹

THE RAID OF THE SÃO PEDRO

In the meantime, on 14 September 1941, shortly before shooting began for “My Friend Bonito,” a community event took place in the Brazilian north-eastern state of Ceará that would come to take on international importance.



Figure 6. Production still: the four *jangadeiros* aboard the *jangada São Pedro* in Guanabara Bay, Rio de Janeiro, 1942. Courtesy Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.

This event, which caught the attention of news editors as far away as the United States, would exert a definitive impact on the content and fate of *It's All True*. Four poor *jangadeiros* (raft fishermen) set sail on a newly built *jangada* (raft) named after their patron saint, São Pedro, to travel roughly 1,650 miles without a compass along the Atlantic coast to Rio de Janeiro. The purpose of their voyage was to speak directly with Brazilian president Getúlio Vargas regarding their unusually harsh working conditions and lack of medical and death benefits. The crew consisted of Raimundo “Tatá” Correia Lima, Manuel “Preto” Pereira da Silva, Jerônimo André de Souza, and Manoel “Jacaré” Olímpio Meira, all residents of Fortaleza, the capital city of Ceará (see fig. 6).

The expedition, or *raid*, as it came to be known in Brazil, was the result of strenuous efforts by Manoel Jacaré to organize a union of *jangadeiros* within his jurisdiction along Iracema Beach, Fortaleza. Jacaré, a father of ten who had learned to read and write at night school, was the president of Iracema's fishing colony Z-1. He had been inspired by President Vargas's introduction of new social legislation, which provided retirement and medical assistance to rural workers, to travel with his fishing partners to personally obtain from Vargas a ruling that would protect all *jangadeiros*. At that time, the fishermen were obliged to give half of their catch to the *jangada* owners. Few *jangadeiros* owned the nets, *jangadas*, and even the *apetrechos* (wooden accoutrements) with which to fish. They lived in shacks on coastal beaches. Few could afford to send their children to school, and very few expected any income when they became too old or sick to fish. *Jangada* fishing was (and still is) a dangerous profession, and when their husbands became disabled or died suddenly at sea, widows were left without pensions or formal assistance of any kind.

In the short run, Jacaré's plans succeeded beyond his wildest dreams. The voyage of the *São Pedro* became an international media event. By the time the *jangadeiros* arrived in Rio de Janeiro after sixty-one days at sea, Getúlio Vargas had decided to take advantage of the record-breaking feat to gain publicity for his new pro-working-class policies and legislation (see fig. 7). Even before they reached Rio, the trip served the *jangadeiros* as a lightning-speed initiation into the modern world and the national public arena. Suddenly, they were being interviewed by journalists at every coastal stop and communicated back to their families via short-wave radio. Just prior to their festive arrival in Rio, Brazilian journalist Edmar Morel published fragments from Jacaré's travel diary in local newspapers. Once the *jangadeiros* reached the choppy waters of Guanabara Bay in Rio, they were escorted by scores of watercraft, large and small, official and leisure, to the city wharf at Praça Mauá. After meeting with Vargas at the presidential palace, an event that was captured by the cameras of the Department of Press and Propaganda (Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda, or DIP) and released in a national newsreel,⁵² the *jangadeiros* traveled by airplane on a newly inaugurated route back to Fortaleza. There, they were warmly received once again as triumphant national heroes. In effect, Vargas had signed a law inducting the *jangadeiros* into the Seamen's Institute to assure them of social benefits only two days after their historic meeting in Rio, and Jacaré had traversed a nearly impenetrable social barrier to make the fishermen's plight known to the highest office of the Brazilian government.⁵³ Film historian José Inácio de Melo Souza has remarked on how the newsreel image of Getúlio Vargas (the embodiment of state power, as well the Brazilian socioeconomic elite) being forced to listen to the demands of humble workers was unprecedented in Brazilian documentaries of the period (see fig. 8).⁵⁴



Figure 7. Brazilian president Getúlio Vargas and his horse. Courtesy Fundação Getúlio Vargas, CPDOC, Arquivo Getúlio Vargas, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Orson Welles read about the heroic voyage in a December 1941 issue of *Time* magazine.⁵⁵ Within a few months, Jacaré and his sailing companions would become the key protagonists in an episode of a new Latin American version of *It's All True*, titled simply “Jangadeiros” (or, alternately, “Four Men on a Raft,” as it is called in the 1993 documentary reconstruction).

THE TRANSITION TO A “LATIN AMERICAN” *IT'S ALL TRUE*

Back in Mexico, the Mercury crew's progress on the laborious “Bonito” shoot (one can neither predict bull behavior in the field nor plan a “good” bullfight for the camera) was disrupted by another logistical dilemma: Welles's commitment to act in the role of Colonel Haki in the RKO/Mercury production *Journey into Fear* while continuing to shoot final scenes for *The Magnificent Ambersons* at the beginning of the new year. Welles was unable to direct *Journey into Fear* (it would have signified a fourth project not provided for under his RKO contract), and all indications are that he viewed it as a “service” project that would employ existing studio talent, such as Dolores



Figure 8. Frame enlargement: Manoel “Jacaré” Olímpio Meira meets with Brazilian president Getúlio Vargas at Catete Palace, Rio de Janeiro, 15 November 1941, from *Heróis do Mar*, D.I.P., 1941. Courtesy Cinemateca Brasileira, São Paulo, Brazil.

del Río, and use a minimum of material resources. Nonetheless, it was a Mercury project, and to follow through, Welles summoned Norman Foster back to Hollywood to direct *Journey into Fear* in his place. Once Foster had completed coverage of bullfights in Guadalajara, along with some location shots in downtown Mexico City in December 1941, he suspended the “Bonito” shoot, dispatched the crew, and returned to Los Angeles.

With the entry of the United States into World War II in early December 1941, contemporary spy thrillers such as *Journey into Fear* gained in popular appeal and historical relevance in the eyes of the studio. However, work on all of Mercury’s projects had to be accelerated, for Welles would soon be embarking on a new mission in early February 1942 as “Good Will” ambassador to Latin America, at the behest of John Hay Whitney and Nelson Rockefeller, a member of the RKO board as well as head of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA).⁵⁶ Welles’s new OCIAA duties included producing a documentary of the yearly Carnival celebration

(hence the rapidly approaching date of departure) to fulfill a request made to the Motion Picture Division (MPD) by the Brazilian government. As Edmar Morel quipped: “We [Brazil] had already sent Carmen Miranda there [the United States], and he [Welles] came here . . . there was an exchange.”⁵⁷ For Welles, this was a welcome opportunity to participate in the war effort, since for medical reasons he did not qualify for military service.⁵⁸ It would also permit him to take the existing *It's All True* project in new directions.

Rather than permanently discontinue “My Friend Bonito,” with shooting nearly two-thirds completed, Welles decided to graft the episode onto a new, four-part “Latin American” project, designed and executed within the framework of President Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy toward the region, which had been stepped up to bolster the political, sociopsychological, and physical components of hemispheric defense during the war. To “My Friend Bonito” and a new “Carnaval” episode, Welles added a reenactment of the “São Pedro” raid, provisionally titled “Jangadeiros,” featuring its original protagonists. A fourth episode (which was never shot and remained undetermined until mid-1943) would have consisted of either “The Story of Jazz,” rehabilitated upon Welles’s return to Hollywood, or a dramatization of the colonial conquest of Peru by Spaniard Francisco Pizarro that would focus on the capture and betrayal of the Inka chief Atawallpa by the Spanish in 1532.⁵⁹ Welles planned to resume and complete shooting for “My Friend Bonito” in Mexico as he made his way up the Pacific coast to California on the final leg of his “Good Will” tour (see maps 1 and 2).⁶⁰

As soon as the plans to shoot the Brazilian Carnival were made official in early 1942, the project as a whole became a coproduction of RKO Radio Studio and the OCIAA, with RKO supervising, costaffing (with Mercury Productions), and financing the production, postproduction, release, and publicity of the film, and the OCIAA providing a guarantee of up to \$300,000 against any losses RKO might incur upon its release as a Grade A motion picture.⁶¹ As an emissary of the U.S. government during wartime, Welles agreed to work on the project without receiving any salary,⁶² although the sponsoring organizations would be covering production expenses, travel, and accommodations for the duration of his tour.⁶³

Up to this point, several Hollywood studios, including RKO, had stationed representatives to handle distribution and publicity in cosmopolitan centers throughout the hemisphere (where the major studios had owned theaters since the late teens). However, under the strengthened Good Neighbor film policy devised by the MPD, film crews (both freelance and industrial) were traveling to Latin America in record numbers to bring more empirically grounded portrayals of the people and the landscape back to the United States, while Latin Americans had the opportunity to meet some of their favorite film stars in the flesh. Many promotional tours, organized with the assistance of the MPD, formalized the policy role to be played by filmmakers

and actors, some of whom, like Orson Welles, were appointed by the OCIAA to serve for limited periods as “Good Will” ambassadors to Latin America. Occasionally, commerce came to be combined with intelligence activity, as in the case of “Good Will” ambassador Douglas Fairbanks Jr., who collected strategically sensitive information on fascist activity for the British government while on tour in Brazil in spring 1941.⁶⁴

It was not unheard of for “Good Will” ambassadors from Hollywood to engage in production activities while on tour (Walt Disney’s animated feature *Saludos Amigos* had been initiated under similar auspices in August 1941, when he gathered research material during a diplomatic visit to Brazil). Nevertheless, it was rare, and the initial stages of the Wellesian location shoot, carried out in the heat of World War II, constituted a film expedition of unprecedented ambitions and proportions for the U.S. film industry and the OCIAA alike. RKO Radio Studio’s cosponsorship of *It’s All True* was doubtless aided by Nelson Rockefeller’s influence as a voting member of the RKO board of directors, just as former RKO Studio head Merian C. Cooper’s role on the Pan American Airlines board of directors had facilitated the production of the backstage musical *Flying Down to Rio* (dir. Thornton Freeland, 1933) at precisely the time that Pan Am was launching new flight routes to South America.⁶⁵

Within the U.S. government-industry collaborative framework of the MPD, *It’s All True* would be directed less toward providing Latin American audiences with U.S. models than toward focusing on community life in different national settings to convey the possibility of ideological identification, cultural dialogue, and exchange throughout the hemisphere. In principle, this new orientation conformed to the guidelines and rhetorical thrust of the OCIAA’s approach to solidifying inter-American relations; in practice, it would lead to considerable friction between Welles and some of his sponsors. At the time of its launching, however, and to all appearances, the film showed considerable promise as a diplomatic tool. “My Friend Bonito” was to feature three of Mexico’s most acclaimed bullfighters (Espinosa, Pérez, and Solórzano were all invited to fight in Spain after the war);⁶⁶ it also included an established Mexican film actor, Domingo Soler, in a key role within the primary diegesis. Part of a large family of professional actors, Soler, like his older brothers Fernando and Andrés, was known for his interpretations of benevolent and reliable paternal or avuncular figures in Mexican family melodramas and romantic comedies. In this capacity, he was able to secure a place for the criollo (Mexican-born of Spanish descent) at the center of Mexican popular culture. The same year as his stint in “My Friend Bonito,” Domingo Soler appeared in the popular comedic hits *La Gallina chueca* (*Mother Hen*, dir. Fernando de Fuentes), where he is an affable bachelor shopkeeper who befriends a widow and her brood of children, and *Del Rancho a la capital* (*From the Farm to the Capital*, dir. Raúl de Anda). By 1941, Soler had



Figure 9. Domingo Soler as a Spanish farmer in *La Barraca*, dir. Roberto Gavaldón, 1944. Courtesy Filmoteca de la Universidad Autónoma de México, Mexico City.

already been reviewed favorably by the *New York Times* for his performance as a cook in the Spanish-language RKO production *Perfidia* (dir. William Rowland with Miguel M. Delgado, 1939), and he would soon go on to win the first Mexican Academy of Cinematographic Arts and Sciences “Ariel” award as “best leading actor” for his role as a Spanish immigrant farmer in *La Barraca* (*The Shack*, dir. Roberto Gavaldón, 1944) (see fig. 9).⁶⁷

Moreover, Mexico was rapidly becoming a key country targeted for the expansion of film activity by the OCIAA and the film industry, while by the early forties, the domestic consumption of cinema was reaching a level and breadth sufficient to transform the cinema into a privileged vehicle for narrating the paths taken by Mexican national identity.⁶⁸ As if to underscore this point, the two bull ranches chosen to serve as filming locations for “Bonito,” Atenco and La Punta, had close ties, by way of *compadrazgo* to the current Mexican president, Manuel Avila Camacho. Finally, Welles hoped to have the musical sound track for the episode scored by Mexican classical composer Carlos Chávez, who at that time was engaged in international col-



Figure 10. Herivelto Martins leading a samba band at the Urca Casino, Rio de Janeiro. Courtesy Yaçanã Martins.

laboration with American composer and “Good Will” ambassador Aaron Copland in the development of the modern “new music” and, in 1940, had been invited by Nelson Rockefeller to present concerts of Mexican music at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.⁶⁹

In “Carnaval” (or “The Story of Samba”), spectators would encounter some of the most accomplished musical talent Brazil had to offer: Herivelto Martins and his Trio de Ouro (the Golden Trio, making regular appearances at the posh Cassino da Urca; see fig. 10);⁷⁰ Grande Othelo (né Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata), by then a nationally known radio and film performer; samba diva Linda Batista (who had close ties to Getúlio Vargas); and popular singer Emilinha Borba, considered, with Batista and Dalva de Oliveira (also of the Trio de Ouro), one of Brazil’s top women vocalists at the time. Appearing with these Brazilian artists in the film was Chucho Martínez Gil, the Mexican bolero singer, who, with his two brothers, had already successfully “crossed over” into the broader hemispheric music circuit by way of NBC radio performances.⁷¹ He had already made a U.S. screen appear-

ance with his group, Los Hermanos Gil, in the Fox “Good Neighbor” musical *Weekend in Havana* (dir. Walter Lang, 1941). Finally, the film would feature scenes set in some of Rio’s most fashionable nightspots, such as the Teatro Municipal and the Cassino da Urca (a well-known international talent showcase where Carmen Miranda had recently been discovered by Broadway impresario Lee Shubert), while the Carnival festivities would be re-created on the soundstages of the respected Cinédia Studio in Rio. Founded by Adhemar Gonzaga in 1930, the studio featured four soundstages and two laboratories, and produced many newsreels for Vargas’s DIP.⁷² At first glance, then, the “Carnaval” episode would boast the touristic appeal that the Brazilian government had been seeking in welcoming Welles and a large RKO crew to Rio to shoot on location.

ORSON WELLES AS AN OBJECT OF DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGE

Walt Disney had traveled to Brazil in August 1941, along with RKO president George Schaefer, vice president Phil Reisman, and John Hay Whitney, for the Rio de Janeiro premiere of *Fantasia*, which garnered great critical, if not popular, acclaim in that country.⁷³ Arriving in Brazil on the heels of Disney’s departure, Orson Welles also appeared the perfect choice as cultural ambassador during a particularly pivotal moment in U.S.-Latin American relations. In addition to his newly demonstrated skills as a filmmaker and his willingness to make a documentary about Rio’s Carnival celebration at the request of the Brazilian DIP, Welles brought to the task extensive experience with radio broadcasting and public speaking.⁷⁴ These attributes would permit the OCIAA to exploit his trip as a major “media event.” As a critical component in the OCIAA’s strategy to block Axis penetration of hemispheric airwaves, radio was already being used extensively by the Getúlio Vargas government to integrate a large and culturally diverse nation, while working to promote the formation of a broad popular base for the Estado Novo regime.⁷⁵ In addition to making himself and his crew available to the Brazilian press on a weekly, if not daily, basis, Welles would make at least two live broadcasts on NBC’s Blue network from Brazil in April 1942: a “Pan-American Day” broadcast featuring Brazil’s pro-Allied foreign minister, Oswaldo Aranha, and a salute to President Getúlio Vargas on his birthday. The broadcasts were made possible through the use of shortwave radio, which had come into use to facilitate transatlantic communications during World War II.⁷⁶

On the home front, Welles’s bridging of the New York and Los Angeles cultural scenes in his professional activities (radio, theater, filmmaking) brought the added possibility of a bicoastal linkage, so vital to the success of the OCIAA’s cultural programs, to his “Good Will” tour. (With the exception of the Hollywood promotional tours, most of the U.S. artists sponsored by the OCIAA had some connection to the Museum of Modern Art in New

York, in dance, music, or the visual arts.)⁷⁷ Moreover, Welles had already achieved considerable notoriety in Latin America as both actor and director with *Citizen Kane*. Despite the film's troubled exhibition history on the U.S. theatrical circuit, it had received strong critical reviews in the United States. And after meeting with favorable criticism in several Latin American countries in the fall of 1941, *Citizen Kane* was elected "best film of the year" in a popular poll conducted by the Rio-based film journal *Cine-Radio-Jornal*, where Welles was voted not only "best actor" (over James Stewart and Clark Gable!) but also "best director," ahead of John Ford and Sam Wood.⁷⁸ This enthusiasm resembled the acclaim that *Citizen Kane* received that same year in Mexico and, significantly, in Argentina, where it was favorably reviewed by Jorge Luis Borges in *Sur* magazine. According to film historian Claudio España, shortly after the film's release, Argentine filmmakers began mimicking the "puzzle" format of its plot out of admiration.⁷⁹ Such critical reception, echoed by popular enthusiasm, augured well for Welles's public appearances in the region.

Welles's diplomatic appointment did not appear at first to disrupt the continuity of either *The Magnificent Ambersons* or the *It's All True* projects. Robert Wise planned to fly down to Rio to work with Welles on the final edit of *The Magnificent Ambersons*,⁸⁰ and although it would necessarily undergo a shift in geocultural emphasis, *It's All True* would retain its basic division into four episodes, along with its narrative foundation in historical experience. In the medium and long run, the shift in regional focus would take Welles's film work in new technical, aesthetic, and ideological directions. In the very short run, however, the ambassadorial appointment would be the first in a series of turning points leading—in "zigs" and "zags," rather than in a straight line—to Welles's loss of complete directorial control over both *The Magnificent Ambersons* and *It's All True*, the cancellation of his contract at RKO Radio Studio, the expulsion of his company Mercury Productions from the RKO lot, and, ultimately, the total suspension of *It's All True*.

Once Welles was traveling in the capacity of "Good Will" ambassador and the scope of *It's All True* was stretched beyond the boundaries of North America to adopt a Latin American focus, the film ceased being a project of personal and professional interest for Orson Welles and Mercury Productions. It entered the political domain of foreign policy and came under the scrutiny of international public eyes and ears. Two strategic shifts as a result of the new OCIAA cosponsorship merit our particular attention: the decision to shoot at the actual locations of the pro-filmic events, in spite of the logistical challenges, and a self-conscious effort at targeting a Latin American as well as U.S. audience. Recognizing that a great deal of the misrepresentations of Latin America by Hollywood had been committed out of simple ignorance, Welles solicited the research assistance of Miriam Geiger in the United States, followed by teams of experts in situ, to steep himself and

his creative team in the history, demographics, geography, and political and expressive cultures of Latin America.⁸¹ The assignment of Carnival was not without its risks, since the subject could easily feed into the tropicalist view of Latin America promoted in the *Good Neighbor* features that Latin American audiences had come to associate with the misrepresentation of their national identity.

FROM CARNIVAL TO “CARNAVAL”

To shoot this episode, Orson Welles, RKO vice president Phil Reisman and a twenty-seven-member crew from Hollywood traveled in separate flights by Pan Am clipper and army bomber to Brazil in late January and early February 1942, arriving shortly after the close of the fateful Third Meeting of Consultation of American Foreign Ministers in Rio de Janeiro. At the conference, Brazil and twenty other Latin American republics (excluding Argentina and Chile) formally severed diplomatic relations with the Axis powers.⁸² Managing affairs for RKO in Rio de Janeiro was Lynn Shores, dispatched with the crew from Hollywood, in addition to the studio’s local “bureau chief,” Bruno Cheli.⁸³

Documentation of the Carnival festivities began on 8 February, with the deployment of a twelve-member RKO Technicolor crew, including William “Duke” Howard Green as director of cinematography, assisted by Edward Pyle as camera operator and John Cass as sound recordist. This crew was supplemented by a smaller, black-and-white crew, consisting of Harry Wild as cinematographer, Joseph Biroc as camera operator, and Willard Barth as assistant cameraman. Because this was an experimental first use of Technicolor to shoot primary action at a foreign location, a black-and-white crew was necessary during the initial stages as a backup mechanism. It moved on to second-unit work as soon as the Technicolor test reels showed good results.⁸⁴ The use of silent black-and-white equipment also provided the crew with more mobility and time flexibility to shoot secondary scenes and locations, which could prove crucial at the editing stage. Coverage of the festivities by the two crews ranged from neighborhood street celebrations in the daytime to dancing in private clubs and the official samba school procession at night (see fig. 11). Since the lighting equipment did not arrive in time for the main celebration, the Brazilian air force lent the crews a set of hefty antiaircraft searchlights for nighttime shooting—a serendipitously symbolic demonstration of Brazil’s new, “pro-Allied” stance, and of the strategic importance of culturally oriented filmmaking to the war effort.

In the weeks following the festivities, Welles and crew began using the facilities of the local Cinédia Studio, as well as recognizable urban locations, such as the modest neighborhood of Quintino and the centrally located Teatro Municipal, to orchestrate a reenactment of selected Carnival festivi-



Figure 11. The RKO/Mercury film crew for *It's All True* in Rio de Janeiro, early 1942. Technicolor cinematographer William Howard Greene rests his arm on the black-and-white camera to the right; immediately behind him stands screen-writer Robert Meltzer; Joseph Biroc stands with arms folded behind the Technicolor camera to the left. Cinematographer Harry Wild crouches between the two cameras; immediately behind him stands still photographer Ned Scott. Courtesy Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.

ties: the Carnival balls for the elite, the *cordões* (groups of celebrants) that snaked through neighborhood streets, and the *corsos* (motorcades) that permeated downtown Rio. These scenes were to be combined with the earlier footage shot “off-the-cuff” to form a loosely woven, double-edged narrative account of Brazilian Carnival in all its social and cultural dimensions. The spectator would be presented with a panorama that extended from neighborhood samba jamming sessions, amid hanging laundry and unpaved streets, to the most picturesque tourist attractions of Brazil’s capital city (the Sugar Loaf Mountain, Christ the Redeemer statue, shorefront casinos).

Of course, the hefty, three-strip Technicolor camera and even the second-unit Mitchell camera used for black-and-white coverage were not as well

suiting to the task of capturing the dynamics of large, celebrant crowds as the lightweight, synch-sound Arriflex 16mm cameras with powerful zoom lenses, used to capture analogous events decades later (such as the Monterey Pop and Woodstock music festivals). Nor was the Hollywood-trained crew accustomed to documentary shooting at a foreign location. Welles likened the live Carnival operation to “shooting a storm” and duly recognized that a necessary emphasis on breadth of coverage by a studio-trained crew in the heat of the moment would not readily yield a tangible story line for either filmmaker or viewer. The new stagings not only would provide the uninitiated viewer with access to a richly layered context against which to decipher the fleeting spectacle but also would assist the Welles team with the eventual task of building a structure out of what was initially documentary material.

The sudden attention to set design and choreography on the visual track, guided by local experts such as musician-composer Herivelto Martins, was echoed by the rerecording of popular 1942 Carnival hits (“Ai, Que Saudades da Amélia,” “Lero Lero,” “Nega do Cabelo Duro”) and the scoring and recording of a special big-band finale, “Panamêrica e Folga Nego.”

These high-profile numbers would be complemented in the film by a more subtle exploration of samba music in its traditional variations, *marcha*, *samba canção*, *samba enredo*, *frevo*, and *partido alto*. During Carnival itself, the *marcha* (marching form) and *samba enredo* (storytelling samba) are the most frequently heard, while the *frevo* (a fast-paced dance form in 2/2 rhythm) hails not from Rio but from Carnival celebrations located in the Brazilian Northeast. The sociocultural character of each type of samba featured on the sound track was to provide the cue for shifts in location, casting, and mise-en-scène on the visual track. Since even an amateur jazz musician and culturally astute researcher and writer such as Robert Meltzer could only begin to penetrate the complexity of samba culture in such a short span of time, international collaboration involving Brazilian advisers, such as Herivelto Martins, was crucial.⁸⁵ Martins had composed the episode’s title samba, “Adeus, Praça Onze” (“Farewell, Square Eleven”), with the Afro-Brazilian radio and screen actor Grande Othelo. Cast in the role of the *malandro* (street dandy), Othelo was to link the disparate social milieus of Rio with his ubiquitous presence and spontaneous performance style, much as Louis Armstrong and his New Orleans-based jazz music fused the postabolition South with the whiter, “liberal” North and the soon-to-be-occupied Europe in “The Story of Jazz” (see figure 35, page 237).

To further ensure the cultural authenticity of his portrayal of Carnival, Welles assembled a team of local journalists and cultural experts, Rui Costa, Luiz Edmundo, and Alex Viany, who collectively came to be known as the “brain trust” for the project.⁸⁶ They joined samba musicians and composers, such as master *pandeiro* (tambourine) player Geraldo Caboré, and also Martins, who, acting as assistant director to Welles, effectively designed and cho-

reographed many of the scenes shot at Cinédia Studio.⁸⁷ Welles also dispatched Robert Meltzer to gain firsthand knowledge of the historical and social dimensions of samba as it was composed and performed in Rio de Janeiro. In the process of conducting this research, Welles immersed himself in Brazilian musical culture, as he had in Mexican bullfighting, to the point of becoming a practitioner.

Of the three shot episodes of *It's All True*, "Carnaval" was the only one to involve the recording of sound on location, and different techniques were used to achieve specific aesthetic results. For example, RKO variable-area sound equipment, shipped down for the occasion and operated by John Cass, was used during the "Praça Onze" and "Symphony of Tambourines" sequences to realistically capture the heterophonic Esperanto of various samba schools performing simultaneously on the Cinédia soundstage.⁸⁸ More sedate and "mainstream" numbers, such as the *samba canção* (lyrical samba) and "Carinhoso" ("Darling," sung by Moraes Netto and Odete Amaral), were recorded onto disks at the Odeon studio in Rio and performed with different actors in "playback" mode.⁸⁹

Parallel to these full-scale musical numbers, additional shooting was done to thematically and geographically "complete the picture" of the role of Carnival in Brazilian national culture and society. In early April 1942, the black-and-white second unit traveled with Meltzer to Ouro Preto, in the central Brazilian state of Minas Gerais, to document the religious counterpoint to Carnival in the Christian calendar: Good Friday, Hallelujah Saturday, and the Easter Sunday procession, marking the seasonal end point to Lent. Welles himself also used a handheld Eyemo and an occasional Technicolor crew to document life in Rio's favelas (hillside slums).⁹⁰ Finally, Technicolor scenes were shot showing the heroic *jangadeiros* arriving on their raft and in modern suits, enjoying the Carnival celebration. All shooting for "Carnaval" on location and at Cinédia Studio was completed in early June 1942.

"JANGADEIROS," OR "FOUR MEN ON A RAFT"

Welles intended to shoot "Jangadeiros" in Technicolor, and because the entire crew was to be stationed in Rio for the "Carnaval" dramatizations through May 1942, he decided to begin the shooting for "Jangadeiros" with the reenactment of the *São Pedro's* triumphant entry into Guanabara Bay—a sequence for which entire fleets of local fishing and Brazilian navy boats had to be mobilized. After scouting locations for the remainder of the episode in Fortaleza in March, Welles had the original *São Pedro* returned to the sea (upon their original arrival, the *jangadeiros* had offered it as a gift to the president's wife, Dona Darcy Vargas), and the four *jangadeiros* were brought from Fortaleza. As soon as he had finished shooting the Rio sequences, Welles planned to return to Fortaleza to shoot an introduction to

the art and economics of *jangada* fishing, complemented by a portrayal of women's tasks (such as the dyeing of the fishermen's clothes in cashew bark juice and lace making), followed by Jacaré's efforts at organizing the fishing colonies along Iracema beach. The expedition, or *raid*, would then be shot at distinct points along the northeast coast of Brazil, such as Recife and Salvador, to recapitulate the key moments of the *jangadeiros'* epic journey. All would culminate with the triumphant Rio arrival.

Taking the task of reenactment to heart, Welles engaged Edmar Morel, a reporter for the *Diários Associados* (Associated Newspapers) and a native Cearense who had originally commissioned and published the travel diary of Jacaré, to write a short historical treatment for the episode. Morel, in turn, headed the aforementioned "brain trust" to compile reports on additional geographic, ethnographic, sociological, and historical data of relevance to form a composite, comprehensive understanding of Brazil.⁹¹ Jacaré's diary would serve as the primary source material for the voyage, while other aspects of the fishermen's lives would be related in the film in a series of dialogues, based on Morel's research, taking the form of interviews by an off-screen narrator with the *jangadeiros* themselves.

THE IDES OF MARCH, APRIL, MAY, AND JUNE 1942

A series of circumstances, both internal and external to the production of the two Brazilian episodes, produced fundamental alterations in the shape, narrative discourse, and trajectory of *It's All True*. Welles had hoped to fuse "Carnaval" and "Jangadeiros" by means of a temporal displacement, having the *jangadeiros* arrive in Rio not on the historic national date of 15 November (commemorating the formation of the independent Brazilian Republic), but in time for Carnival, so as to double the impact of both celebrations. Upon their original arrival in 1941, the *jangadeiros* had been carried atop their *jangada* in a procession to the presidential palace; now the *jangada* would also become a float in the Carnival parade, lending a jubilant touch to the solemnity of their presidential petition. The use of Technicolor stock throughout both episodes would facilitate the syntactical articulation and stylistic continuity of the two historic events. Understandably, Welles expressed his apprehension to RKO over any inconsistency caused by a change in film stock in the transition between episodes.⁹² However, after the shooting of the "Jangadeiros" Guanabara arrival scenes had already begun in alternation with the "Carnaval" stagings, RKO president George Schaefer denied Welles's request for total Technicolor—putatively for budgetary reasons.⁹³

It is worth noting that this Technicolor restriction, which coincided roughly with the first preview of *The Magnificent Ambersons* in Pomona, California, on 17 March 1942, did not detract in the end from the aesthetic value

of “Jangadeiros.” Rather, it was symptomatic of the nature of Welles’s difficulties with RKO. In all probability, the disposition of Schaefer and other RKO executives toward Welles’s requests to enhance the Brazilian episodes was influenced by the negative box office prognostications for *The Magnificent Ambersons* extracted, rightly or wrongly, from the unfavorable audience response to that preview.⁹⁴ Most of the “Jangadeiros” scenes still had to be shot, and this prohibition did introduce a source of aesthetic discontinuity between, on one hand, the Rio scenes showing the *jangada* docking at Praça Mauá and the *jangadeiros*’ subsequent incorporation into the Carnival proceedings (already being shot in Technicolor) and, on the other, the coastal scenes of Fortaleza and other Northeastern points of interest during the voyage (which would now have to be shot in black-and-white). By extension, there would be a logical change in the type of technology and the size of the crew that Welles would have at his disposal to complete the shooting in Brazil: from state-of-the-art and well populated to rudimentary and spartan, further limiting the aesthetic and dramatic possibilities for “Jangadeiros.”

In the meantime, “Carnaval” was suffering from delays in the shipment of footage. A major budget cut seemed imminent in early May, when RKO vice president Phil Reisman was sent back down to Brazil to inform Welles of the technical, financial, and temporal limits RKO was setting on the *It’s All True* project as a whole. In the months since the Carnival celebration, RKO location manager Lynn Shores had regularly sent negative reports concerning Welles’s choice of shooting locations, schedules, casting of nonprofessional Afro-cariocas (black residents of Rio), and unforeseen expenditures back to RKO headquarters in Hollywood—and, incredibly, to representatives of the Brazilian DIP.⁹⁵

Then, on 19 May 1942, shortly after Reisman’s arrival, Welles and crew were setting up for one of the takes of the *jangadeiros*’ arrival when a motor launch towing the *São Pedro* near Gâvea beach went past the shooting location, took a sharp turn toward the beach at Barra da Tijuca, and broke the tow line, provoking an irreparable turn in the life of jangadeiro leader Jacaré, the structuring of the film, and, ultimately, the welfare of the Fortaleza fishing community. All four *jangadeiros* fell into the ocean when the *jangada* overturned, and all resurfaced, yet only Jerônimo, Tatá, and Manuel Preto were rescued: Jacaré tried to swim ashore but disappeared into the waves.⁹⁶ Although years later, Jacaré’s children still expressed a desire to see filmic evidence of their father’s disappearance, there is no surviving record of this event on film. Welles is quoted in the Brazilian press at the time as saying: “Emotion would not allow us to act. We filmed nothing, absolutely nothing. And I am satisfied that this was so.”⁹⁷ (See fig. 12 and the testimonies of Jacaré’s children in appendix 1.)

Contrary to what might be assumed under such circumstances, the acci-



Figure 12. Manoel “Jacaré” Olímpio Meira at the Marinha da Glória, Rio de Janeiro, shortly before his death. Photograph by Jean Manzon. Courtesy Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.

dent did not provoke immediate sanctions or a termination of the project on the part of RKO.⁹⁸ Rather, it momentarily ensured the continuity of the Brazilian shoot: by a kind of macabre logic, Phil Reisman concluded, probably after sobering discussions with Welles and his Mercury entourage, that to suddenly pull out of the project would damage RKO’s international reputation.⁹⁹ Welles, for his part, was resolved to complete the episode as a “tribute to Jacaré and the jangadeiros.” He took immediate steps to compensate Jacaré’s family.¹⁰⁰

Despite the circumstantial linkage of the accident to the film, none of

those close to Jacaré ever blamed Orson Welles directly, and this disposition prevailed in the liberal Brazilian press at the time. One article published in Fortaleza's *O Povo* announcing Jacaré's sudden death even went so far as to claim that "Orson Welles too, almost perished in the disaster,"¹⁰¹ a sympathetic portrayal that was without empirical foundation: Welles had been on shore preparing for the shoot at a different location and was completely unaware of the capsizing of the raft when it happened. Nevertheless, RKO's recently imposed restrictions on the project held sway—Reisman managed to cancel around a month of scheduled shooting for "Carnaval"¹⁰²—and most of the RKO-affiliated crew returned to the United States as soon as the "Carnaval" shoot, culminating in the Cassino da Urca musical scenes, was brought to a close in early June.

Welles proceeded to complete "Jangadeiros" in Northeast Brazil with a remaining budget of around \$10,000 and with 45,000 feet of black-and-white nitrate negative, a silent Mitchell camera and tripod rented from Cinédia Studio, a 35mm Eyemo camera borrowed from Abafilm photographic studios in Fortaleza (where test strips of the black-and-white rushes would be developed),¹⁰³ and a skeleton crew composed of Richard Wilson, Elizabeth Amster (Wilson), and Shifra Haran from Mercury, along with cinematographer George Fanto and assistant Orlando Santos "on loan" from Cinédia Studio. On 13 June, Welles flew to Fortaleza with his collaborators and the three surviving *jangadeiros* under circumstances far more sobering than had surrounded the *jangadeiros'* triumphant return by plane the previous December, or his first scouting mission to Ceará in March.

To complete the episode with a semblance of historical fidelity, Welles devised a strategy whereby Jacaré's brother, João Jacaré, would play Jacaré in the early scenes from the voyage, and Jerônimo's young cousin, Isidro André de Souza (better known as "Sobrinho"), would assume the title male role as a young jangadeiro who dies accidentally at sea, shortly after marrying a beautiful young woman from the community, played by Francisca Moreira da Silva. This screen death, experienced and interpreted in the collective imaginary of the fishing community as a ritual of mourning for the recently departed Jacaré, prompts Jerônimo and his colleague Manuel Frade to call for a voyage to Rio de Janeiro in protest of the *jangadeiros'* harsh working conditions. This is shown in what is now the "Meeting" scene, immediately following the "Funeral" scene in the 1993 documentary reconstruction (see figure 33, page 221).

After three intense weeks shooting in glaring equatorial sun with no dollies, cranes, or professional lighting equipment to speak of, Welles, the crew, and the core cast departed in mid-July for the cities of Recife, in the state of Pernambuco, and Salvador, in the state of Bahia, to film the remaining reenactments of the episode (see map 2).¹⁰⁴ Welles's execution of these reenactments was still not without its dilemmas in terms of dramatic and visual

continuity, and it continues to pose challenges today, especially where the editing syntax of the voyage to Rio is concerned. For example, because Sobrinho had to be sent to Salvador to act with Francisca in the courtship scenes shot at the idyllic Itapoã beach, and João Jacaré did not travel with the group, Welles decided to use Sobrinho (who according to the plot was already dead and buried back in Fortaleza) in some of the *São Pedro* voyage scenes as the “fourth” jangadeiro, and his profile and figure can be discerned in some of the Recife and Olinda church scenes. However, once Sobrinho had left Salvador to accompany Francisca back to Fortaleza, George Fanto continued shooting scenic pickup shots featuring the three surviving *jangadeiros* in Bahia. The ambiguity surrounding the “fourth man” is rather joltingly resolved with the scene of the *jangadeiros*’ arrival in Guanabara Bay, in which the late Jacaré appears in full view aboard the *São Pedro* in the Technicolor footage shot prior to the accident of 19 May. Welles planned to address Jacaré’s sudden appearance by openly rendering him a posthumous homage in the closing narration of the film, as is indicated in the closing intertitle of the 1993 reconstruction.¹⁰⁵

In the meantime, another shakeup had been taking place at RKO. Changes of RKO Studio presidents had been periodic and almost customary since the studio had gone into receivership in the early thirties, yet no restructuring had been as extensive or had as profound an effect on the studio’s long-term policies as the management changes in 1942. They began with the temporary departure of studio head Joseph Breen (who, with George Schaefer, had approved Welles’s Latin American project) on a Mexican vacation in March. A former Keith-Albee-Orpheum executive, Charles W. Koerner, temporarily replaced Breen and seems to have taken a very different view not only of *It’s All True* but also of the studio’s priorities overall. Breen’s absence from the studio coincided with a number of events damaging to Orson Welles: the infamous 17 March Pomona preview of *The Magnificent Ambersons* (edited at long distance by Robert Wise because the United States had placed an embargo on civilian air travel to foreign locations),¹⁰⁶ and the debate over the use of Technicolor in *It’s All True*, followed by the angry memos from Lynn Shores in Rio de Janeiro. These ominous signs were followed by the reshooting and cutting of scenes in *The Magnificent Ambersons* and a series of premature and inflated budget calculations for the completion of *It’s All True* at the studio—and culminated in Koerner’s formal appointment as RKO general manager in charge of production and Schaefer’s decision to abbreviate the Rio shoot and severely restrict expenditures on “Jangadeiros” in early May. Then, at an RKO board meeting on 12 June 1942, David Sarnoff (of RCA, a major force behind the founding of the studio in 1928) and Nelson Rockefeller submitted their resignations, while Floyd Odum, already a principal stockholder in RKO, came to secure a solid controlling interest in the company. Although not nearly as prominent in na-

tional collective memory as airline magnate Howard Hughes, who would acquire controlling interest in RKO Pictures Corporation in 1948, Odium was a major business force, and frequently front-page news in the forties, having made his wide-ranging fortune from investing in enterprises that were in decline or on the brink of bankruptcy (such as RKO Pictures) during the Depression.

Since mid-1941, RKO Studio had been losing money on a monthly basis, which was not unusual for studios during the early war years prior to U.S. mobilization. Still, the specter of the studio's crises during the 1930s Depression continued to loom large, and within a few days of the board reconfiguration, George Schaefer resigned as RKO president. Schaefer had originally been brought in during the 1939 reorganization of RKO under Odium's Atlas Corporation to bolster the studio's image as a purveyor of original and distinctive films, an agenda that led him to hire Orson Welles and Mercury Productions that same year. On 26 June 1942, Schaefer was replaced by Ned Depinet as president of RKO Radio Pictures and by Odium associate N. Peter Rathvon as president of the parent company, Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation.¹⁰⁷ Thus, ideological rifts marked these June resignations, especially where the cultural politics of the studio were concerned. The perceived necessity of "budget cutting" during the war fueled the Odium-Koerner regime's preference for rapid-fire, low-budget productions such as the horror films produced by Val Lewton and *The Mexican Spitfire* screwball comedy serials featuring Mexican actress Lupe Vélez, in place of more studied, literary-inspired, or technically and aesthetically daring works such as Welles's first projects, which took more time and effort to produce. As a result, RKO sacrificed its profile as a trademark of "quality" entertainment that stimulated public appreciation for cinema as a legitimate art form in its own right. The company had undergone a political and economic coup d'état. As Orson Welles himself described it, "RKO did a very South American thing. They changed Presidents in the night."¹⁰⁸

Despite the dramatic shift to mostly "B" production, the causality of these events in relation to the suspension of *It's All True* is more complex than meets the eye, as will be explored in chapter 6. During the June events, Welles was shooting on Mucuripe Beach. He appears to have known that Odium and his henchmen were not necessarily disposed to do him, his company, or his current projects, *The Magnificent Ambersons* and *It's All True*, any favors. Indeed, just as Schaefer's promotion had ushered in the arrival of Mercury Productions, so his resignation became punctuated by Mercury's sudden expulsion from the studio premises. Koerner is rumored to have embossed the RKO letterhead with this telling phrase: "Showmanship Instead of Genius."¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, when Welles learned in July that RKO had revoked his three-picture contract and was publishing a disclaimer for any "liabili-

ties” linked to his actions in Brazil, he assumed that even though this obviously meant that he would not be producing any *new* projects at RKO, the incoming regime would allow him to complete *It’s All True*.¹¹⁰ This assumption was reinforced by a public statement, on 7 July 1942, that RKO still planned to release *It’s All True*.¹¹¹ After leaving Brazil and completing his “Good Will” tour through South America, Guatemala, and Mexico, Welles had every intention of completing the film on location in Mexico, and then at the studio in Los Angeles.

As of mid-April 1942, it had been estimated that three weeks would be needed to complete the exterior scenes for “Bonito” (tentatively scheduled for 2 June through 19 June in central Mexico) and that several process shots “to cover location shots” would take one week to complete (tentatively scheduled for 27 June through 3 July at the RKO Studio).¹¹² With the delays related to the “Carnaval” shoot, Jacaré’s fatal accident, and the rudimentary support for “Jangadeiros” in the Northeast, this additional month of production might have been completed by early September, following Welles’s return. A production document also reveals that plans were afoot as late as May 1942 to shoot animation scenes in Technicolor.¹¹³ Although the document makes no specific reference to any particular episode, animation techniques are described in the production documents and script for “The Story of Jazz,” and a brief animated flight of a bird is even called for in the later script material for “Jangadeiros,” albeit in black-and-white.¹¹⁴

To arrive at a final cut of the footage for the Mexican and Brazilian episodes, considerable postproduction work was needed in the realm of sound recording and mixing. The location sound track for “Carnaval” had to be synchronized with the image track, and then mixed and cut with the studio-recorded musical selections (see appendix 2). Original scores still had to be composed and recorded for “Jangadeiros,” tentatively, by Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos), and for “My Friend Bonito,” by Mexican composer Carlos Chávez, both of whom were featured prominently on the inter-American concert circuit.¹¹⁵ Welles even hoped to record and synch dialogue at the studio with the principals from each of the three episodes (the actors in the roles of the hacienda owner, the bull trainer, and Jesús Vásquez Plata, the boy, in “Bonito”; Grande Othelo for “Carnaval”; and Francisca Moreira da Silva at the very least, for “Jangadeiros”). This plan is evident in the footage itself: in both “My Friend Bonito” and “Jangadeiros,” several of the main actors, such as Vásquez Plata, Moreira da Silva, and Jerônimo (in “Jangadeiros”), are seen mouthing words of dialogue in medium shots and close-ups. Grande Othelo and Moreira da Silva each mentioned in separate interviews that Welles offered to have them brought to Hollywood for this purpose.¹¹⁶ It would have been easy enough to engage the two well-known Mexican actors Carlos Villarías and Domingo Soler, as well as Vásquez Plata,

who was still living in Los Angeles, for this task, especially given the close interaction between the Mexican film industry and the studio system at this time.¹¹⁷ However, the logistical and “political” obstacles to transporting two Brazilian civilians who had yet to make their mark as international entertainers across the equator during wartime were formidable, not to mention the budgetary restrictions and the predominantly hostile disposition of the new studio administration.¹¹⁸ Plans were abandoned for dialogue in the Brazilian episodes, and Welles began drafting a new screenplay that would substitute his own voice-over narration for most of the dialogue on the film’s sound track.¹¹⁹

Finally, studio executives willing, the hypothetical fourth episode needed to be shot and edited in its entirety. Although the subject and shooting locations for this episode had yet to be firmly decided upon, there are good reasons why, with little time to lose, Welles mentioned “The Story of Jazz” as the most logical choice as late as July 1942. Duke Ellington was still under contract to Mercury at this time, and there is evidence of Louis Armstrong being summoned to the studio in June 1942.¹²⁰ However, given Mercury Productions’ eviction from the Pathé studio lot and RKO’s growing lack of sympathy for the project as a whole, Welles appears to have played it safe in the end by substituting the Andean episode for “The Jazz Story” in the form of a brief, narrated segue between “My Friend Bonito” and “Jangadeiros,” with the film’s plot culminating in Rio’s “Carnaval.” This change is reflected in his final 2 September 1943 screenplay submitted to RKO, which the studio never approved.

At this juncture, with Welles’s expedition to Latin America complete and the editing and release of *It’s All True* in limbo, a few observations regarding the history of the film and its fledgling form as a text are in order.¹²¹ First, in contradistinction to the conventional romantic emplotment, or “event” history, whereby *It’s All True* becomes “lost” due to a climactic battle between Welles and RKO, the film’s production is dotted by a series of crossroads, culs-de-sac, and scenic detours, beginning with the delay of the jazz episode and Foster’s assignment to the “Bonito” shoot in September 1941 owing to the parallel production of *It’s All True* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Given the complexity and resilience of the film’s four-part structure, along with the filmmakers’ degree of commitment, none of these shifts was individually sufficient to provoke a complete revamping or cessation of the project. Instead, each time, the film was duly salvaged and redrawn to reflect ever more pressing wartime circumstances, and its potential social and cultural impact became strengthened as a result. Cumulatively, however, as I hope to illustrate later in this book, these turning points did signal changes in the film’s thematic foci and ethico-aesthetic orientation. Although they cannot be fairly assessed in the absence of a final product, such changes in turn triggered a countermovement and, to a significant extent, misreading of Welles’s mo-

tives and the work in progress on the part of the larger production and distribution apparatus, with serious consequences for the film's material fate.

For the moment, it is worth noting a shift within the evolving text from a preoccupation with protagonists whose notoriety was achieved through aggressive, idiosyncratic, or sociopathic behavior (William Randolph Hearst, Henri Landru, Huey Long) to personages of humble origins who nonetheless were celebrated and revered by their communities (in nearly all the planned episodes of *It's All True*). This grassroots turn was accompanied, paradoxically, by a movement away from relatively self-contained local and national spheres of action and influence, toward an explicit referencing of transnational relations within the hemisphere. This latter shift brought the role of the state prominently into the picture both on-screen and offscreen, without losing sight of the film's homespun and markedly diverse protagonists, from a rural mestizo boy and his slightly anthropomorphized bull to samba players and artisanal fishermen, many of whom would appear as themselves.

More than being a whim of Welles the filmmaker or an automatic result of the OCIAA's mandate, this mixture of habituses is strongly indicative of the degree to which *It's All True* straddled two formative and manifestly distinct moments in U.S. cultural production in the twentieth century: (1) a concern with civic life and a fascination with (if not always respect for) ethnic and regional differences, inflected by the politics of Roosevelt's New Deal and communicated by way of documentary cinema and grassroots ethnographic observation as privileged modes of popular education (early to late thirties); and (2) popular and institutional support for the war effort, coupled with the recalibration of the film industry's approach to representing Latin America and a new hemispherically focused program of cultural production, marketing, and diffusion (late thirties to midforties).

More immediately, the entry of the film into the state-sponsored milieu of cultural diplomacy gave full license to the international press to track the production of *It's All True* almost continuously while it was in progress, well beyond what Welles or any of his crew had experienced within the customary reach of the Hollywood rumor mill. This has yielded evidence with which to assess its "success" during production. As well, and notwithstanding the official fanfare and sudden press-worthiness attached to *It's All True* as a "Good Neighbor" project, Welles's location approach to shooting (devoting time and resources to meticulous research and engaging many of the stories' original protagonists or their modern-day equivalents as actors) meant that expectations for *It's All True* by the communities involved, within the framework of both the civil rights movement and the Good Neighbor policy, were quite different from ordinary expectations for commercial U.S. films at that time. Salient among these, and a considerable stake within the domain of inter-American representation at large, was an "authentic" portrayal

of cultural practices and community life whether defined along ethnic or national lines. Such a portrayal was, in effect, an explicitly stated mission of the film. Yet the meaning of the term *authentic* has tended to vary, according to both habitus and stylistic paradigm, throughout the history of audiovisual representation. Because it is so central a structuring principle of *It's All True*, a grasp of authentic representation as it was interpreted by Welles, his protagonists, and his sponsors *in actual practice* is essential to understanding the fate and the design of this cross-cultural, semifictional project, a topic to be revisited in chapter 5.

Chapter 2

Toward the Text of *It's All True*, Based on the Work in Progress

Here, I will be drawing directly from the surviving material evidence of *It's All True*, to present a sketch of the film's narrative and stylistic contours as they developed from preproduction, when it was still a North American project in 1941, to the immediate aftermath of location shooting and Welles's voyage to South America in 1942. By confining this retrieval to the period of the film's historical viability as an inter-American project, that is, up to the end of World War II, I intend to sidestep the characterizations that have been made of *It's All True* during its disappearance, based on partial or nonexistent evidence.

Notwithstanding the effort to reattach historical, social, and authorial meaning to the material work regardless of its chances for completion—then or now—one is still confronted with the ways in which the 1942 suspension has impinged upon its textual retrieval and reconstruction. Added to RKO's termination of Welles's contract midstream and the ensuing obstacles to physical access is the fact that Welles did not find adequate support to complete the film prior to his departure for Europe in 1947, so that what began as a momentary hiatus in the film's progress (from Welles's perspective, at least) became a near-permanent state of affairs. The consequences that have followed from these reversals are both methodological, affecting the practical tools and strategies available for reconstruction, and ontological, affecting the kind of text one can hope to reconstruct, given the material fragmentation and extensiveness of the work in progress.

THE PROCESS OF RETRIEVAL AND RECONSTRUCTION

Unlike finished films that, upon release, circulate well beyond (and often succeed in effacing) their immediate context of production, the text of *It's*

All True has never been detached, materially or analytically, from the historical circumstances of its production and the technical strategies undertaken to make the film. This has its advantages and disadvantages. Roland Barthes has commented on how, even when a material work is completed by its author, its production continues with the act of its interpretation by the reader/viewer, whereupon it is fashioned into a "text." The work is singular, but the text is always "plural," because the work is susceptible to, and may even encourage, more than one interpretation. In the absence of a discrete work (whether bearing the director's or the studio's "cut") that puts the initial production and postproduction process to rest, it can truly be said that the text of *It's All True* is "*experienced only in an activity of production.*"¹ That is, the reconstructed text of *It's All True* both *anticipates* and *follows from* the assemblage of the work in progress, in which both the reader/viewer and the author can take part. The work in progress *itself* opens itself up to plural identities and articulations, as if to illustrate how the editing of any film is, according to Orson Welles, analogous to but a single interpretation, albeit an overdetermining one, of a "musical score."² Ironically, and overlooking the loss that *It's All True* represented to Welles as an aging filmmaker, the necessary return to the postproduction mode in the act of retrieval from his perspective would have represented something of a utopian scenario. Having been trained in the theater, Welles rarely looked forward to viewing his own films after their release, since he felt a strong urge to continue working on them as though they were plays with multiple performances.³

Upon opening up the text, we are invited to return to the work of filmmaker and crew while on location, an experience that is usually lost in the editing process as select images come to eclipse the range of viewpoints and creative possibilities found in the rushes.⁴ While one finds evidence of the spatiotemporal manipulations associated with *découpage* and cues for editing in the shooting scripts and outlines pertaining to *It's All True*, the vast majority of the surviving nitrate footage gives us segments of actions carried out in "real time" and within nearly continuous (albeit artistically and technically delimited) space.⁵ As the process of editing the 1993 documentary demonstrated, this "real" time and space tends to shed away like a snakeskin with the first splice, regardless of how conservatively one cuts in relation to the state of the found footage and to the larger, historically based narrative that Welles was in the process of building. As a result of its lingering ontological proximity to the original events, the text-in-reconstruction can afford to be more capacious, and in some ways more honest with respect to the flow of history, than what the edited work would have allowed. While it might bring us closer to Welles's method of shooting and to the actual flow of production events, a sheerly descriptive approach to surviving footage and script elements does not necessarily bring one any closer to a sense of narrative flow, point of view, and the aesthetic contours associated with the text upon

projection (i.e., images and corresponding sounds moving according to a determined rhythm and in a given sequence).

Beyond the incompleteness of editing and synchronization, the lack of continuity sheets and, in some cases, shooting scripts (as with the Brazilian episodes) means that the narrative dimensions of what was actually shot can only be extrapolated from the combined scrutiny *and synthetic integration* of nitrate rushes identified according to location, episode, and scene (if possible), partially reconstructed scenes (that appear in the 1993 documentary), script material, production notes (see fig. 13), and correspondence. As the most dramatic example of the necessity of narrative reconstruction, rather than restoration, the destruction of much of the Technicolor footage pertaining to "Carnaval" both increases the significance of such documents as textual evidence and as a sign of pro-filmic intentions and values yet fails to remove uncertainty regarding the shape of what actually resulted from the filmed reenactments. This uncertainty carries over into the historiographical exercise, paving the way for the film's participants to more actively take part in the retrieval and reconstruction. When interviewing "Carnaval" participants in the field, the question "How was it done?"—working backward from the work in progress—occasionally gave way to the question "Just what *might* Orson Welles and his collaborators have done with a Technicolor camera, four banks of arc lights, and an RKO sound truck for that particular scene?"

Initially, then, the reconstruction of the text is guided by an *inductive* logic, retracing Welles's steps from the hills to the soundstage or from the beach to the *jangada* (figuratively speaking), and then into the film episode that "Carnaval" and "Jangadeiros" might have been. One is encouraged to apply a "montage principle," to quote Walter Benjamin, whereby the larger structures are built up "out of the smallest, precisely fashioned structural elements."⁶ This procedure, which takes account of the initial production process in 1941–42 as well as its results on film, is what I term the *endotext*, or "text-in-the-making," of *It's All True*. It acknowledges the impossibility of attaining a definitive version of the film, while making available in a loose assembly the constitutive elements needed to produce an approximate image of the completed work as it was planned. (The endotext and its distinction from the exotext of *It's All True*, developed in chapter 5, is analogous to Julia Kristeva's concept of the geno-text in relation to the pheno-text, except that the latter refers to the "'flat' surface of structured signification" in a completed work, and in the geno-text, the notion of "productivity" is effectively restricted to the "play of signifiers before meaning."⁷ The working concepts I am introducing here are more processual and ephemeral where the delineation and interpretation of the text is concerned; that is, the text collapses into the act of viewing and retrieving the work-in-progress.) Several caveats are attached to the endotextual exercise as a result.

PICTURE NOTESMAKING THE JANGADA 6

Need about 10 more set-ups:

3-5 eyemo chokers of nails, pegs, etc. *on masts*
 3 regular camera compositions - *2 days*

ACTUAL FISHING OPERATIONS 12-15

Need sizeable fleet of ~~4-5~~ boats and a launch. *M2 F 20 per*
 Catch being speared.

THE FISHING

A couple of big production numbers on the fish
 being thrown out: includes the donkeys walking
 past.

THE RAIDTHE RETURN OF THE JANGADEIROS TO SHORE

Should we take up here the matter of the distance
 the jangada goes from shore? For instance, show a
 very distant shoreline - or none at all? Tell here
 about the whole business of navigation. At any rate,
 the return of the jangada we have seen built and
 launched in actual sailing operation shows the number
 of other jangadas there are. In other words, this is
 the first time we see more than one jangada. Now we
 see hundreds rolling up on the beach, lying on their
 sides, pulling in as far as the eye can see. We
 realize here for the first time that the jangada is
 the regular means of fishing for at least one large
 fishing community.

Here is a big question: do we go from the making of
 the jangada, jangada's launching, sailing, return,
 the community -- or do we go from the jangada sequence
 to exploitation. For now I may assume we go from the
 jangada's return to the division of the catch.

Scene of buying the catch. Who should we get to pay
 the fishermen and others? Make inserts of the rolling
 logs and hands lifting up the jangada - for this need
 late afternoon sunlight.

Returning jangadeiros may be shot from pier - look at
 pier the day we go on the launch.

From unfair division of the catch we could go to low
 standard of living, thus showing the community.

THE JANGADEIROS TALK IT OVER

Finished except for close shots - 1's, 2's, and 3's
 which we will do Thursday morning.

THE DEPARTURE AND THE JANGADAS IN THE BAY

School children singing.

Cannon (?) 12

Churchbells 1

Last abraços on the beach.

Women and little children on the dunes.

The last sight of Iracema beach.

Return
 Also finish house building: show nets hanging up to dry.

Figure 13. Orson Welles's "Picture Notes" for "Jangadeiros." The shorthand sentence reads, "More women and little children on the beach taking their last looks late in the afternoon"; translated by Linda Eggert. Courtesy Richard Wilson-Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.

Delimiting Textual Content

One might be tempted to compare the paper and celluloid remains of the work in progress to the perpetually shifting, sprawling jigsaw puzzle Susan

Alexander Kane uses to dispel her boredom inside the palatial “Xanadu” estate in Welles’s *Citizen Kane*. Yet in the case of *It’s All True*, the puzzle can ultimately only be partially reassembled, because not all of the shot film has survived and because there has never been a definite “whole” against which to extrapolate the work in progress from the many possible “fits” that can be found for the scattered pieces. Just where does one draw the line around what is to be included in this assemblage? Would the film have been four reels or eight in length? Would it have included an episode from the United States, or been limited to Latin America?

In response to this dilemma, on the one hand, I have included in this endotext only those portions of the film for which some concrete evidence exists in the form of contractual arrangements (as in the case of “The Captain’s Chair”), screenplay material, or footage. Ideas contemplated by Welles at different times yet clearly discarded by mid-1942, such as the Landru story or the interlude on cattle raising in the *sertão* (arid interior) of Pernambuco state in Brazil’s Northeast, have been left out, even though they enrich our understanding of the film’s history and thematic design.⁸ On the other hand, the timing of the film’s suspension at a point when shooting for some episodes had not been completed and postproduction for all episodes had yet to begin discourages the exclusion of the Anglo-American episodes, even though it is clear that “The Story of Jazz” had more chances for inclusion in the final version of the film than “The Captain’s Chair” and “Love Story.” This is not only because production arrangements were more advanced for “The Story of Jazz” than they were for the other two episodes, but also because the concept for an episode shot in the United States and specifically related to jazz (or, at the very least, linked thematically to the Latin American material), was publicly announced at various points during the shooting of the film.⁹ The historical proximity of the North American and Latin American versions of the film encourages a consideration of the ways in which ideas from the earlier episodes might have been carried over into the episodes that actually went into production, allowing for ideological and stylistic continuity—and thus a sense of authorship. Also included in the endotext is what might technically be considered “postproduction” material generated by Welles and his collaborators after August 1942—such as a “random assembly” of shots of the *São Pedro*’s arrival in Guanabara Bay, and a “rough continuity draft” by José Noriega of the final bullfight sequence of “My Friend Bonito.”¹⁰

Second, the timing of the suspension combined with the shift of production from North America to Latin America has made for considerable *unevenness* in the development of the episodes. In any empirically grounded reconstruction of *It’s All True*, one must work with different types of evidence and engage in different orders of speculation depending on which episode is involved. For example, of the North American episodes, only “My Friend

Bonito" progressed as far as the shooting phase. Yet most of those episodes, including "Bonito," were fully scripted and poised for studio-style production, permitting a thorough analysis of theme, characterization, and narrative structure in relation to what are essentially protofilmic projects in literary form.¹¹ At the same time, although considerable black-and-white negative for "My Friend Bonito" survived the changes in studio ownership (over 75,000 feet by the latest calculation), several scenes were never shot, making an analysis based on the celluloid film object slightly more speculative than what would be the case for "Carnaval" and "Jangadeiros."

Conversely, although the shooting for both Brazilian episodes was essentially completed during the summer of 1942, there was less precision at the preproduction stage (given Welles's arrival at the brink of Carnival and his deliberate elaboration of script material *in situ*), so that one is challenged to perform a more synthetic reading of multiple treatments, sketches of dialogue, and sets of shooting instructions to obtain a rough projection of Welles's plans for the finished product.¹² And, although the legend of the Inka Atawallpa's failed attempt to resist the Spanish conquest was never scripted as a full-fledged cinematic episode,¹³ it has survived in aural and scripted form as an installment of the *Hello Americans* radio series titled "The Andes," produced by Welles for the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) and broadcast by CBS in late November 1942. "The Story of Jazz," on the other hand, has survived as a polished screenplay, along with concrete plans for musical scoring and diegetic content. Yet not a single shot was filmed nor note recorded.

As Raymond Bellour has cautioned, it is never possible to behold a cinematic work in its entirety, since any portion of it can only be viewed for more than 1/24th of a second (the speed of projection for most sound films) or, alternatively, as an inert strip on an editing table, and hence film texts are always, in Bellour's words, largely "unattainable."¹⁴ This exclusiveness factors into our viewing pleasure. Uneven development and incomplete preservation have made portions of *It's All True* doubly elusive and open to speculation, so that the textual "whole," and even sections of the film, are available to the reader/viewer only in sampled—that is, synecdochal, or allegorical—form. The tension surrounding fleeting presences in the ordinary projected film is replaced at the movieola by a gnawing awareness of gaps, only partly assuaged by the projectable 1993 reconstruction. Even the reconstructed portions of "Jangadeiros" (the only "fully reconstructed" episode), shown in the 1993 documentary, function as just such a synecdoche: "Now that you have seen this, you can just imagine what the rest is like." The ongoing preservation effort continues to pivot around these synecdochal dynamics as an organizational logic is sought to guide the assemblage of reels of nitrate negative.

Hypothetical Syntax

Even in portions of the film that have been physically assembled, the syntax has been concocted from what is *suggested* by the ordering and content of the shots. With the exception of "My Friend Bonito," the only existing "syntax" we have to work with is given either roughly in the shooting scripts for episodes that were never shot or, alternatively, in the rushes where shots are presented in the order in which they were filmed (there is no work print or internegative to be used as a reference). Yet as Constance Penley and Linda Williams have each pointed out, any thoroughly cinematic production of meaning by way of audiovisual signs is dependent precisely upon the *syntagmatic* organization of shots, especially where visually generated metonymy, and to a lesser extent metaphor, are concerned.¹⁵ At what point during the process of reconstruction and from what spectatorial position do the textual fragments begin to make meaning?

A first step is to *revalue* the state of the footage—its signifying potential—by revisiting the process of cinematic signification itself, or the point at which audiovisual images begin to make "sense" for the viewer (the passage, for Kristeva, from geno-text to pheno-text) and, just as important, to what extent this sense can be attributed to an authorial intervention. Since movement, generated by the displacement of camera and its subject matter in time and space, has been hailed as an essential feature of cinema as an art form, some physical and perceptual instability is to be found in all films. By focusing on cinematic movement as a series of displacements, some theorists have deflected attention away from the symbolic meaning to be located within the frame or inscribed more unequivocally and forcefully between individual shots or scenes by way of explicit cuts. Breaking with the binary distinction that Dudley Andrew and others have stressed between structuralist and hermeneutic analysis (predicated in turn on differing definitions of the cinematic sign), Marie-Claire Ropars-Wuilleumiers has advocated the replacement altogether of the notion of the cinema as a language (whether specifically or nonspecifically defined), for which a distinct method of decodification exists. For the structural linguistic paradigm of discrete signifiers strung together in different combinations, she substitutes that of the cinema as a form of "writing," a series of traces bearing semiotic *potential*, emphasizing the brushstroke, or the selectivity of camera movement and positioning. Thus, the junctures marking syntactical *discontinuity* between traces, represented in the concept and practice of montage, are what trigger the "differential movement" necessary to the generation of meaning and are therefore paramount as gateways to interpretation.¹⁶ Ropars-Wuilleumiers's focus on the *threshold* of signification and on the productivity of points of syntactical *breakage* within the text is encouraging, for it suggests that the dis-

embodied evidence of the work in progress of *It's All True* might be read as a series of traces capable of generating meaning (or at least, insight into the discursive orientation[s] and cultural location[s] of that text) by way of a montage that is yet to be performed.

There is some resemblance in the notion of "traces" to the interest of both Peter Wollen and Roland Barthes in iconic and indexical signifiers as key components of audiovisual expression. The meanings of such signifiers are best interpreted in context, both narrative and historico-cultural, rather than according to the more arbitrary and predetermined usage and interpretation associated with symbols in structural linguistics.¹⁷ Hence, to the extent that "differential movement" and the discontinuity generated by montage are technically missing from the unedited footage of *It's All True*, the indexical value of the images is heightened as we reach outside the work to the historical sphere for meaning. At the same time, the potential cultural and narrative value of *iconic* signifiers is brought into relief by the prominence of certain objects in the frame or the repeated appearance of people and objects across a reel or two. An example might be the smoking branding irons in sequences depicting Bonito's coming of age, or the close-ups of weather-beaten faces against the wind- and sunswept landscapes of "Jangadeiros." These signifying traces already discerned in the rushes are helpful in the detection of any "scoring" that might be attributed to Welles. Thus, although what Tom Gunning has identified as a filmic narrator "system" is incomplete—the narrative discourse of each episode has not yet gelled, since the representational elements have not been sufficiently organized so as to address the spectator in a storytelling mode—the *stories* themselves are still accessible; and, working with the enframed images and the director's notes, it is possible to detect authorial *agency*.¹⁸

Beyond the rhythmic sequencing and syntactical ordering of protextual elements on a strip of film, editing also involves their selection and placement *in hierarchical relation to one another*, so that a narrative can emerge, differentiating the filmed material from the production process and lived experience portrayed within it.¹⁹ This is as true for documentary as for fiction film, providing the key elements of point of view, geohistorical setting, and cause-and-effect logic are present.

Even though the footage contains the rudiments of what could be termed narrative "point of view," or perceptual focalization (based on camera angles, etc.), the absence of narrative hierarchization by Welles has caused the endotext to become detached from any single sociocultural center of narration. This is both because Welles chose a *polycentric* approach to representing cultural and historical processes in the hemisphere and because the film's "narrator" (i.e., a textually designated position from which to decipher and interpret the pro-filmic elements) has yet to be firmly inscribed. Paradoxically, while the lack of a designated sociocultural center in the work in pro-

gress has contributed, over the years, to misinterpretation by uninformed observers and different cinematic uses by unfriendly parties, it also has worked by default to enhance the transcultural quality of the text-in-the-making. The film and its legacy have become fair game for identification, interpretation, and narration by different sociocultural communities, from Mexican hacienda owners to samba musicians and *jangadeiros*, and this has permitted the text to slip out of the grasp of the North American hegemonic operation linked to its wartime sponsorship. From this angle, the brevity and dispersal of the Brazilian testimonies in the 1993 reconstruction can be seen as working to contain this slippage.

The absence of a “central” or stable position from which to decipher the film does not necessarily mean that the endotext is devoid of narrative threads—rather, the source of identification and signification for the viewer resides in the ethnographic value of the shot material as “record footage,” or footage that is shot for “broadly descriptive purposes.”²⁰ The ethnographic value is increased precisely *because* of the importance of a documentary record as grist for an authorial narrative, signaling an important turning point in Welles’s aesthetic orientation and shooting methods. (One finds ethnography, stemming from documentary impulse, resurfacing in *The Lady from Shanghai*, *Othello* [1952], *Chimes at Midnight* [1966], and *F for Fake* [1973]).

Regardless of what the aesthetic characteristics of the finished work might have become, operationally, the endotext of *It's All True* resembles a modernist or “open” text, for which a lack of cohesion can be seen as a virtue, not a fatal blow, foregrounding formal manipulations that in turn help to inscript the process of production within the space of the work.²¹ The division of the film into four interdependent episodes, which was retained throughout the project’s viability, provides the beginnings of just such a text, along with the structural basis for narrative syntax to develop according to an authorial vision.

What follows is an interpretive exposition of the seven episodes planned for inclusion at various junctures in the film’s development between June 1941 and September 1943, bearing in mind the heightened feasibility and audiovisual tangibility of the three Latin American episodes compared with the others. In the attempt to strike a balance between the fact of fragmentation and an enabling “illusion” of the whole, I have tried to render the endotext as much as possible in cinematic units of enunciation (shots, scenes, sequences), respecting the film’s segmentation by Welles into four episodes.

Although no definitive sequencing of the episodes appears in either the North American or the Latin American version of the work in progress, there are clear indications in the advanced script material that the pan-American version Welles was preparing for release would have either (1) begun with “My Friend Bonito,” arrived at “Jangadeiros” after a “fourth” episode (most probably “Atawallpa, a.k.a. The Andes”), and ended with “Carnaval”; (2)

placed "The Story of Jazz" (as the alternate fourth episode) prior to the three shot episodes sequenced as "My Friend Bonito," "Carnaval," and "Jangadeiros," culminating in the *jangadeiros*' triumphant arrival in Guanabara Bay; (3) featured "The Story of Jazz" after the three shot episodes, sequenced as "My Friend Bonito," "Jangadeiros," and "Carnaval";²² or (4) included a "love story," such as the one scripted by John Fante and Norman Foster, after the three shot episodes.²³ In sequencing the episodes, I have aimed for a balance between the chronology of the film's development and the episodes' degree of probability and feasibility at the postproduction stage. However, the episodes can be read in any sequence the reader desires.

"THE CAPTAIN'S CHAIR"

This episode was the least developed prior to the late 1941 shift from a North American to a Latin American orientation, and thus is the least likely to have been produced upon Welles's return to the United States. Given the regional setting around Hudson's Bay, it was to have formed the northern quadrant of the initial four-part ensemble. Mercury obtained the rights to the Flaherty story in July 1941, yet there is no evidence of a screenplay, or even a treatment, having been drafted by writers assigned to Mercury. Nevertheless, it is clear that Welles had an avid interest in producing "The Captain's Chair" as part of the first version of the film, and there are telling resonances in theme and narrative structure, as well as contrasts in approach to cross-cultural representation, between "The Captain's Chair" and the shot episodes. Moreover, given Flaherty's strong influence on Welles's approach to realism and documentary throughout the making of *It's All True*, the episode constitutes a useful frame of reference with which to gauge ideological and strategic shifts provoked by Welles's experiences shooting on location in Latin America.

Prior to its acquisition by Welles, the story of "The Captain's Chair" had appeared in three separate versions: as a serial in the *Elks Magazine* (1928–29); as a televised play broadcast over the BBC network in Great Britain; and as a novel published in 1938. All three are based on Flaherty's own experiences while working as a young prospector in the Canadian Arctic for Sir William MacKenzie of the Hudson Bay Company. The basic plot concerns the events leading to a fatal dispute between an English boat captain (alternately named "Captain Small" and "Captain Grant") and a self-important director of the company, during the maiden voyage of a new icebreaker intended to streamline the captain's laborious route around Hudson's Bay in winter. Aside from its obvious impact on the ship's crew and passengers, the struggle of wills and ideologies (the captain is a proud craftsman in tune with both his vessel and the environment; the director rests his authority on class privilege and corporate control) causes a serious delay in the de-

livery of vital supplies and mail from England to local fur traders, prospectors, and the Inuit community. In sharp contrast to his film *Nanook of the North* (1922), which masks the extent to which the Inuit way of life had already been changed by modern contact, Flaherty shows us in "The Captain's Chair" that by the twentieth century, this community was strongly dependent on such shipments for its survival. Hudson's Bay Company controlled much of the commerce in the Canadian Arctic. Thus, in a region devoid of modern communications enjoyed in the industrialized zones, the ship's delay highlights this dependency and severely disrupts the lives of the inhabitants.

The differences among Flaherty's versions evoke the manner in which orally transmitted stories vary with each telling; taken together, they are indicative of Flaherty's tendency, like that of Welles, to put a "good story" to many uses. Many of these differences hinge on a shift in genre from melodrama (the serial story) to epic adventure (the book). In the short magazine version, the plot is narrated externally in the third person and is centered spatially and psychologically on the captain's drama onboard the ship between Newfoundland and Hudson's Bay. Much of the dramatic tension derives from the fact that we are never allowed to get close to the captain, let alone read his mind. Instead, the events are focalized through the more sympathetic characters caught in the midst of the struggle: an experienced prospector named MacKenzie, the niece of the company director, Mary, and the captain's first mate, Nichol, all of whom represent voices of "reason" on a ship led astray by affective impulse. At several junctures, the class-based conflict is overshadowed, for dramatic relief and more secure closure, by the subplot of a budding romance between Nichol and Mary, whose marital plans by plot's end provide an allegorical solution to the conflict.

Accordingly, in the magazine serial, the natural environment is often exploited for the purposes of "pathetic fallacy," following the codes of gothic melodrama, and observing the rationalist dichotomy between civilized society and unbridled nature (manifested in the more basic drives of humans aboard the ship), with the ship serving as a concrete metaphor for the fragility of civilization. True to melodramatic form, nature appears as an external force reflecting humans' troubled interior states: while the shifts in weather are not atypical for the region, their timing coincides precisely with dips and turns in the plot, calibrated to coincide in turn with the changing mental states of the protagonists.

In the 1938 novel, as in most of Flaherty's films, nature achieves formidable proportions as a character and historical force, commanding the deep respect of all human characters and placing the pragmatics of survival above any conformity to Euro-American social norms and expectations. As the result of its complex focalization and attention to the natural environment, the novel thus transmits a keener sense of the human struggle for survival

along the long time span into the modern age, as well as the sociocultural stakes attached to the colonial imposition of modernity in the New World. One also finds different registers of narration in the novel, working to relativize (if not to decenter) any "Western" worldview in contrast to other perspectives, including (ever so briefly) those of nonhuman beings.

At moments, the encounter with nature takes on an existential dimension: "We kept scanning every nook and cranny of the drift-swept cliffs which lined the river; but all that lived and moved were our own black dots strung out in the long white reaches of the endless stream."²⁴ Flaherty also goes to great pains to describe the various species of animal life, both domesticated and wild, that sustain rather than imperil the humans' ability (both indigenous and "white") to endure physical and psychic strain. At the same time, his use of description appears directed toward ethnographic ends; functioning as a chronicle as well as an "epic adventure," the novel provides a record of transculturation following a first generation of exchange between indigenous and Euro-American peoples in the North. Although Flaherty uses "Inuit" and "Eskimo" interchangeably for the Western reader's convenience, he points out in the beginning that "The word 'Eskimo' is really not of Eskimo origin. It is an Indian term of contempt meaning 'eater of raw meat.'"²⁵ Thus, Flaherty distinguishes throughout between the Inuit inhabitants of Ungava and Baffin Land and the "Indians" of the lower Labrador peninsula who come to hunt game each summer and occasionally attack the Inuit. The prospector-narrator also refers to himself as *kablunak*, Inuit for "white man," and in several instances attempts to see himself as the odd-looking intruder perceived by the local native inhabitants: technically, he is a witness-narrator, rather than a fully fledged protagonist-narrator or "hero" of the story.²⁶

The novel is narrated almost entirely in first person, a subject position that the reader is encouraged to associate with Flaherty as the implied author, since the narrator is a "white" prospector who wanders across the tundra for more than a year in the attempt to join the captain's ship once supplies are delayed. Yet we also obtain key narrative information through other characters with whom the narrator comes into contact. One chapter is devoted entirely to the narration in first person by Comock, an Inuit man, of how his family became stranded on a deserted island in the Arctic sea, then after ten years of living in isolation made their way over the ice back to the mainland, where they came upon the stranded Flaherty and his crew. With each story and each jaunt by the prospector and his native guides, the author takes us with dense, yet terse, description to the specific places where the events occurred and, in so doing, traces a geocultural map of the territory surrounding Hudson's Bay.

In the novel, the relocation of the drama to the outdoor setting effectively expands the breadth of the narration to include those who are suffering the consequences of the British ship-based conflict all around the bay yet are in-

visible to those in the throes of melodrama aboard ship. The narrative thus comes to encompass not only "the captain's tragic drama, but the epic of the Eskimo's struggle for survival, a struggle which [Flaherty] not only witnessed, but shared."²⁷

Although I have been unable to gain access to the televisual play, there are signs that it may have remained close to the basic dramatic structure and characterization of the serial story, especially since Flaherty himself makes an appearance as "Captain Grant." A first film treatment, based on the serial story, was submitted by Flaherty to RKO for consideration in 1929 and received a favorable reader's review: "The background of this story is photographically superb and one of timely interest. The contrast presented by the young love story strengthens the tragedy of the two old men who are blinded by petty jealousy. The very simplicity of the plot adds to its power and pathos."²⁸

There are no signs of the studio ever having seriously considered the treatment for production prior to Welles's *It's All True*, however. A second submission of the story by Flaherty to the same studio in novel form, just prior to its publication in 1938, met with a less than enthusiastic reception, which speaks to the contrasts in genre and narrative strategy mentioned earlier: "This is more travelogue than a novel, [*sic*] a travelogue with interminable and tedious descriptions of barren regions, weary treks across them, and the ever-present peril of starvation. The author's knowledge of these subarctic wastes is handsomely displayed—but his choice of plot material is less striking."²⁹

Clearly, this reader was unable to grasp, even at this advanced date in Flaherty's film career, his penchant for "slight narrative" (to use Siegfried Kra-cauer's term), and his embedding of the plot in the features of the physical landscape as well as numerous cultural encounters. Although it remains unclear which of these versions Welles would have chosen for adaptation in *It's All True*, the creative challenge of ethnographic material without "much plot" along with the later submission date to the studio make the novel more likely. In any event, a few observations regarding the relevance of the novelistic version of "The Captain's Chair" to the overall project of *It's All True* and Welles's broader concerns as a director are warranted.

In the novel, the use of multiple viewpoints to tell and retell the same set of events pertaining to the wayward ship is very close in spirit to Welles's own stress on intersubjectivity as the basis for documentary "truth," a stress that provides for a margin of creativity in narration without abandoning the possibility of representing collective historical experience. This strategy also permits the subtextual inscription of the relativization of cultural and existential truth, which is fundamental to the defusing of colonial discourse. Among the competing "truths" we are presented with in the novel are the captain's loss of dignity and his enlistment as a harbinger of the submission of the

Arctic to the control of the transnational corporation. Is this “truth” more relevant than the “truth” of those struggling on land to survive? It is also worth pointing out the semantic and formal resonance between the lingering enigma of the captain’s drama in the novel, symbolized in the chair, and that of “Rosebud,” never fully resolved within the diegesis of Welles’s *Citizen Kane*.

For example, in the following passage in the novel, in which Flaherty achieves the literary equivalent of the cinematic track-in and pull focus, he writes:

If anywhere there was a break to the room’s agreeable simplicity, it was in the chair which stood at the head of the main table. It was altogether of another period, upholstered in an old-fashioned way with tufted red leather. Its wood was not oak at all, but gleaming mahogany, elaborately carved. It had been retrieved, I learned, from the old *Eskimo*. It was the captain’s chair.³⁰

Reading this passage, one cannot help but recall the ornate furnishings of the Amberson mansion in Welles’s *Magnificent Ambersons* and how they appear to be out of synchronization with the rapid modernization outside in the town toward the end of the film. Yet the analogy with the spatial foregrounding, sentimentalization, and forgetting of objects (both of them toys) in *Citizen Kane* is equally compelling. In Flaherty’s novel, instead of being introduced to the circumstantial causes for the captain’s death (and the ship’s delay), we are left with the teaser, albeit still within the narrator’s ocular and tactile grasp—and hence, the reader’s interpretative capacity—of a rare wood chair. Similarly, in *Citizen Kane*, the camera allows the audience to witness a blazing sled in the final shots, echoing the miniature snow globe presented to us in a track-in and extreme close-up of Kane’s dying hand in the film’s opening scene. However, in contrast to “The Captain’s Chair,” Welles leaves us without a narrative agent to assist us in deciphering these material “clues,” and in this sense, he takes an aesthetic—and psychosocial—risk that Flaherty is not willing to attempt.

Although Flaherty never fully wrests narrative agency from the “white” narrator-pro prospector in his portrayal of the Anglo-colonized world, the power relations between native and nonnative are momentarily inverted where access to narrative representation is concerned: the Inuit mythologize the experience of the captain, who does not physically appear until the last pages of the book and is never given a voice to narrate his own story, while his new icebreaker is transformed into a phantom ship, the broken promise of modernity for the Inuit people. Still, Flaherty avoids leading the reader to any facile or Manichaeian conclusion. In commenting on the tendency of modern progress to alter the stakes and tools of survival and to spark competitive struggles on a range of social and cultural fronts, “The Captain’s Chair” calls for the revaluation of artisanal production as an *intermediate* form, with which

Flaherty as both prospector and filmmaker himself identified. Captain Small/Grant is a self-made "maverick" as well as a *two-way* messenger, whose job it is to mediate between simple and complex societies. Since there is no "turning back," it is most likely in this intermediate realm (he seems to argue) that a solution to impending generational dilemmas of life in the North might be found. A similar stance is expressed by Welles in the later episodes of *It's All True*.

It is not difficult to see how Flaherty's story must have appealed to Welles, who later described himself as a "corner grocer" in an "age of supermarkets" in relation to the Hollywood industry.³¹ In all probability, he would have reserved the role of the captain for himself. Yet it is virtually impossible to speculate on precisely how this story might have been adapted for the screen, given the absence of a shooting script. One can only assume that, like the other initial North American episodes, the dramatic action would have been shot in the studio and fused with atmospheric scenes shot at or near the northern locations.

As for the resonances between this story and the other planned episodes of *It's All True*, "The Captain's Chair," like "The Story of Jazz," "My Friend Bonito," and "Jangadeiros," traces an expeditionary trajectory from the margins to the "center" of cosmopolitan life, while it shares with "My Friend Bonito" and "Atawallpa" a focus on the intercultural shock in the wake of European colonialism in the New World. The predominantly harmonious and sentimental relationship between man and beast in the story is repeated in "My Friend Bonito," and as in the latter episode, Flaherty comes close to focalizing the narrative of the novel through an animal character, the lead dog of the prospector's sledge team, whose suffering and courage help the travelers to gauge the harshness of the winter climate and landscape.³² Within the broad sweep of modern history, the Canadian episode directs our attention to the fate of the "little man," exhorting us to protect the dignity and well-being of the working person, while presenting a more pronouncedly dystopian view of Western capitalist expansion than that in "Love Story," "My Friend Bonito," and "Jangadeiros."

Moreover, in exploiting the personal and societal *quest* as a narrative device, the episode introduces the reader/viewer to vast expanses of territory to the north, thereby implicitly posing the question of how film can operate as a mode of historiography in an actively or residually colonial context. As Walter Benjamin observed: "Any examination of a given epic form is concerned with the relationship of this form to historiography. In fact, one may go further and raise the question whether historiography does not constitute the common ground of all forms of the epic."³³

This question, which is latent at this stage of the film's development, will come to be posed more explicitly by Welles in the later episodes, as well as in his choice of a multiepisode format for intercultural representation. What

is significant is how, in the evolution of Flaherty's "The Captain's Chair," a Eurocentrically oriented, monological format of historical representation is self-consciously abandoned for a mode of narration that is multivocal and heterological in both form and content. This notion of the compatibility in a single text of premodern vernacular with modern Euro-American or classical European cultural forms will be found to resonate throughout the shot episodes, beginning with "My Friend Bonito." An essential contribution of "The Captain's Chair" to the film as a whole remains its preoccupation with the changes in the quality of human relationships and balance of power provoked by the inauguration of a "new age" in the Americas, however—and whenever in the twentieth century—that age might come to be defined.

"LOVE STORY"

Unlike "The Captain's Chair," this episode was fully scripted by the author of its original story, John Fante, and was ready for casting by fall of 1941, when Welles and Foster began shooting "My Friend Bonito." It shares with "The Captain's Chair" an explicit preoccupation with the dignity and pride of working people, seasoned with a consideration of class and the challenges of assimilation in relation to "white" ethnicity in the United States. Like "The Story of Jazz," "Jangadeiros," and "Carnaval," the episode features a romantic plotline set in a specific sociocultural context. In this episode, however, the romance, inspired by the courtship and marriage of Italian American writer John Fante's parents, takes center stage and serves as the hub around which other themes revolve: illusion and disillusionment in love, the tension between ethnic pride and class mobility for immigrant groups, and the role played by the second generation in providing hope for the reconciliation of social disputes. Thematically and stylistically, the screenplay resembles realist cinematic depictions of ethnic and immigrant life in the United States prior to the 1934 enforcement of the Production Code, such as King Vidor's *Street Scene* (1931). Generically, "Love Story" is a romantic comedy, and its setting in San Francisco in 1907, coupled with its focus on the Italian American working-class community, also singles it out as an interesting intertextual "foil" for *The Magnificent Ambersons*, which is set around the same time but is focused on the disintegration and socioeconomic decline of a patrician family in the Midwest.

As with "The Captain's Chair," the story told in the shooting script is but one of several versions in circulation of how Fante's father, Nick ("Rocco" in the screenplay), an Italian immigrant, wooed and wedded his mother, Mary ("Della" in the screenplay), a second-generation Italian American, in Denver, Colorado.³⁴ John's widow, Joyce Fante, recalled that Nick Fante originally dated Mary's sister prior to falling in love with Mary; in the script this has been transmuted to Rocco's fateful encounter with Della and her friend

"Hilda," who acts disapprovingly toward Rocco's pursuit of Della. Other changes include the relocation of the events to San Francisco and the amplification of certain "disasters" in the plot's denouement.³⁵ (For example, Della's mother is so hefty that she falls right through the dilapidated porch of Della's new home.)³⁶

According to the shooting script, the episode was to begin with an introductory narration by Orson Welles, who acts as the mediator between a general (culturally assimilated and younger) audience and the episode's "old-fashioned" and ethnically flavored milieu. The plot depicts the well-intentioned aspirations, necessary mistakes, and harmless pretensions associated with pursuing the American Dream when "fresh off the boat" and falling suddenly in love. Rocco, a somewhat coarse and maladroit yet thoroughly smitten and earnest young Sicilian immigrant, tries to get acquainted with Della at a local amusement park. During a series of vignettes that involve awkward bodily positionings and visual disfigurements as Della and her friend, pursued by Rocco, pass through various entertainment venues at the park (such as a hall of mirrors), Della's own emotions travel a roller coaster from initial lack of interest, to ambivalence, and finally to fascination for her suitor, to the point of dismissing a police officer who has been summoned by Hilda to protect them from the pesky Rocco. Later Rocco, aiming to please Della and her skeptical middle-class family, claims in his broken English that he is an "architect" and that should he be permitted to wed her, he will build her a "nice house."

Of course, Rocco is only a bricklayer, and the "nice house," as Della soon discovers after their wedding, is a run-down rental on the outskirts of Sausalito. Eventually, the neighbor, Mrs. O'Farrell, comes to check on the "graphophone" that Rocco had borrowed from her to play Caruso recordings for Della and comments on the fact that the rest of the furnishings were also borrowed from friends and neighbors. Della is mortified by the social burden implied in the loans, and her family is dismayed by Rocco's capacity for deception and evident inability to provide Della with a secure future. Yet despite the exposure of his "lie," his dedication to honest hard work is indisputable, so that the truth of his hope in a bright future and of the couple's love for each other prevails.

Ostensibly a lighthearted twist on the "boy-meets-girl" romantic formula, this episode foregrounds the importance of popular entertainment in the public sphere as a context conducive to the formation of intimate relationships and social ties for the majority of the U.S. population. This stress on the public sphere as a crossroads where people from different social classes and ethnic backgrounds can mingle freely provides yet another twist on what Richard Wilson has called the central theme of the "dignity of the laborer" in the North American version of *It's All True*.³⁷ Indeed, the social identities in this episode are shaped and transformed less through the worker's move-

ments and efforts in the workplace, as in many Anglophone documentaries of the thirties, where there is little sense of the pursuit of individual desires, than through his or her engagement in leisure activities outside of it.³⁸ After meeting Della in the amusement park, Rocco takes her to a vaudeville show, where they see a pair of Dutch comics; to a roller-skating rink; to the beach, where the sound of a band playing the music of John Philip Sousa is heard in the distance; and to a dance hall. It is in a trolley, in the presence of Irish and Chinese passengers, that Rocco professes his love to Della, on his knees, hand to his heart, reassuring her: "Plenty work—plenty brains. Rocco Stefani, some day he's best architect in whole San Francisco! . . . I know what you think. But this is America [gesturing triumphantly]—Chance for everybody. Rocco Stefani—Rocco Feller!"³⁹

Moreover, just as Fante's writings, based on personal history, provide the reader with access to the emic viewpoint of the Italian American working-class community, for Welles, the "love story" in *It's All True* is not reserved for "white" Anglo characters, as tended to be the case in the era of Production Code enforcement. This alternative assignation, which finds added support in the "Story of Jazz" and "Jangadeiros" episodes, is intrinsically connected to the anchoring of cultural politics in *It's All True* in the notion that American identity is plural in its manifestations and rooted in ethnic difference; to be successful with a wide popular audience, this and other films need to derive their story material from the experiences and aspirations of the audience as it was differently constituted at each locale of distribution and exhibition (suggesting a "homegrown" rather than industrial approach to the construction of points of audience identification). The plurality of American identity is reflected most strongly in Fante's shooting script in the multiple references to other ethnic groups inhabiting the Bay area, along with the use of vernacular and "broken" forms of English in the dialogue: casual contractions like "ain't" and "wanta" abound, and one finds the familiar echo of Tony Camonte's (played by Paul Muni in *Scarface*, directed by Howard Hawks, 1932) "Purdy good, huh?" uttered by Rocco and Della's grandfather.⁴⁰ Moreover, the most pronounced tensions in the film are based on class and regional differences rather than on ethnicity or nationality. During the introduction of Rocco to the family, Della's mother makes a point of asking him just what "province" in Italy he is from; after he has replied, she proceeds to call him "*Bruta animale*," "Abruzzi goat," and "Abruzzi skunk."⁴¹

Through this and subsequent episodes, Welles seems to be arguing that as long as one provides various means of cultural translation for the neophyte viewer, cultural specificity in representation is *not* a deterrent to broad popular reception. In the opening narration of the episode, Welles was to have said: "This is a story of simple people. . . . It teaches no moral and proves nothing. But it really happened, and it may be the story of your mother and father."⁴²

Indeed, had it been produced, this might have been the episode with the most “mainstream” appeal. Even in its written form, the episode suggests that a commitment to cultural authenticity and popular entertainment does not necessarily imply a sacrifice of stylistic experimentation and expressiveness in favor of naturalistic realism. As the footage for the Latin American episodes reveals, the authentic-popular couplet would become a central aesthetic premise of the work in progress as a whole. The play of identification and deception, or demystification, in the courtship and marriage scenes of “Love Story” is foreshadowed in a series of sudden encounters, disappearances, and distortions of bodily features (corresponding to fluctuations and reversals in psychological impression, as revealed in the dialogue) in the amusement park scenes. A level of ambiguity unusual for romantic comedy is created in these scenes between external physical factors shaping the characters’ subjective emotional states and the externalized expression of those states in the twists and turns taken by the *mise-en-scène*.

Although this episode was evidently discontinued with the transition to the Latin American version of *It's All True*, its more subtle and complex conception of popular romance together with social contextualization survived, yielding considerable repercussions for the casting, characterization, choreography, and construction of spatial relations in the Brazilian episodes. Ultimately, as I will argue later, this permitted a treatment of foreign settings and characters in *It's All True* that departed radically from the Hollywood norm.

“MY FRIEND BONITO”

The authors hope that somewhere in Mexico there can be found a bull so intelligent, so literate, and so movie-struck that he will perform the miracles that are required of Bonito in this script.

NORMAN FOSTER and JOHN FANTE, shooting script for “My Friend Bonito”

This is a pivotal episode within the structuring of *It's All True*, not only because it binds the North and Latin American versions together chronologically and thematically but also in that it marks a discursive and strategic shift at the level of the “macro” text, from the fictional adaptation in the studio of nonfictional source material received in story form to the direct documentation of unstaged events or events reenacted by the participants themselves. While all of the shot episodes of the film exhibit an impulse to eliminate layers of mediation between the viewer and the original protagonists, “My Friend Bonito” is distinguished for its level of mimesis in relation to depicted rituals, even if the story is based on popular legend rather than on firsthand or secondhand testimonial. This mimetic impulse, which explicitly introduces in *It's All True* the value attached to “cultural authenticity,” is

conveyed in the episode's description in the publicity material and the screenplay as an "animal story" that is to be presented not as "a contest between man and beast" but as a "predestined tragedy"; bullfighting is not a "sport," but a "science," not a "game," but a "spectacle," with its own ethical and aesthetic standards.⁴³

Flaherty's first version of the "original" story, registered under his name in 1928, is set in Spain; it tells of a friendship between a fighting bull named "Bonito" and his trainer, "Manuel." The tragedy of the bull's certain death in the ring is averted when he is pardoned by the crowd. The second version already transforms the trainer into a child and the pardoner into the Mexican president, introducing a theme that would be of special interest to Welles during the Good Neighbor era: the essential role in participatory democracy of the possibility of dialogue between the powerless and the powerful, a theme compellingly repeated in "Jangadeiros." Flaherty narrates his story in the manner of a popular legend that is somewhat lacking in historical and geographic specificity, although, as I mentioned in chapter 1, there *was* an actual incident in Mexico City involving a Spanish bull named "Bonito." In staging the pardon of the Mercury "Bonito" in the Plaza El Toreo, Foster and Welles were in effect reenacting this event.

In preparing the screenplay, Fante and Foster adhere to Flaherty's second version and split the original character of "Manuel" the trainer into two parts: a little boy named "Chico" who grows up with Bonito, saved at birth by the boy, and an older bullhand "Miguel," who acts as Chico's mentor. In so doing, the screenwriters follow Flaherty's example of portraying other cultures through the eyes of young boys growing up (*Moana*, *Man of Aran*, *Elephant Boy*, and *Louisiana Story*, 1948). Yet the child's role can also be seen as a means of "sanitizing" the bullfighting ritual for North American audiences, by transforming the bull into a child's "pet." (Bullfighting was, and still is, illegal in the United States, where it has long been considered a form of cruelty to animals.)⁴⁴

Essentially, then, in its scripted form, "My Friend Bonito" is a story of the coming-of-age of a bull interwoven with the coming-of-age of a young boy, who must learn to give up the companion he loves most so that it can fulfill the purpose for which it is destined in the "outer world": the social, economic, and political realm of the nation beyond the sheltered confines of the hacienda and adjoining village. Through the friendship between boy and bull, the spectator is able to gain insight into the process of bull raising, the art of bullfighting, and certain aspects of Mexican rural life, such as the "blessing of the animals" each year on the day of Corpus Christi. The latter is a highly syncretic ritual, in that it (quite visibly in the surviving footage) draws the younger residents of the countryside, most of whom have strong indigenous roots, to the town church to offer their favorite animals to be blessed by the Catholic priest, a scene that would be echoed in Mexican director

Emilio “El Indio” Fernández’s *Maria Candelaria* (1943). Chico takes Bonito in a donkey cart, a gesture that not only confirms for the viewer the quality of Chico’s affection for Bonito but also begins to endow the latter with semi-human status, bringing the spectator closer to the bull prior to the branding and the fateful bullfight. This is also the moment when the audience is first encouraged to identify with Chico’s psychological, as well as perceptual, viewpoint, iterated through a classical shot-reverse-shot exchange of looks with the priest, as Chico tries to direct his attention away from the crowd of smaller animals and children that has gathered at the folds of his cassock. To grant Chico’s request, the priest must make his way slowly through the throng, dipping the flower he holds in blessing along the way. This particular placement of obstacles in the path of a character’s trajectory—what I call “the trope of impeded passage”—is a Wellesian rhetorical device reiterated in the “Finding the Body” sequence of “Jangadeiros,” and in later films by Welles, especially in *Mr. Arkadin* (or *Confidential Report*, 1955), as well as in *Journey into Fear* (which was shot after “Bonito” but just prior to Welles’s departure for Rio).

I should also note that the “Blessing of the Animals” scene appears to have been added by Foster during the shooting of the film and inserted at the “age-appropriate” point of the script, when Bonito is still feeding with the cows and calves.⁴⁵ In general, the progress of the bull is measured in the script, as in actual practice, in yearly intervals that are linked to specific rites of passage. At about ten months of age, it is branded and numbered, then sent to a separate corral for bulls only, until the age of four or five, when it is tested (at an open-range *tienta*) and rated for fighting in the ring. In the shooting script, Bonito is branded a short time after being blessed by the priest, and Miguel, the bullhand, duly notes in the record book, “Bonito-7444-1 año.”⁴⁶ In a record book such as this one at La Punta hacienda, I was able to identify the different bulls at various stages of maturity that had been purchased by Mercury to appear in the film, twelve male bulls, and forty-one fierce cows (see fig. 14).

With each rite of passage, the boy becomes more devoted to the bull, yet he also recognizes that his definitive separation from Bonito is progressively approaching. In viewing the rushes to this episode, one is struck by the fact that there are very few shots, let alone scenes, in which human characters are not shown together with animals. For most of the film, then, the bull’s development dictates the rhythm and structure of the plot. What might appear to the uninformed viewer as mostly long shots with bulls, and more bulls grazing, licking salt, then occasionally frolicking with a young peasant boy, are actually scenes precisely conveying the passage of time, the transformation of one of the main “protagonists,” rare moments of intimacy between a village dweller and a bull raised by one of the most powerful haciendas in Mexico, and consequently, the building of dramatic suspense on more than one level.



Figure 14. José “Joe” Noriega with a Mercury bull at La Punta hacienda, Jalisco, Mexico, 1941. Courtesy Orson Welles Manuscripts Collection, Lilly Library, Indiana University.

Upon a closer reading of the shooting script, one can discern a strong allegorical dimension in the narrative trajectory marked by these rituals: the bull’s journey to the ring is a test of Bonito’s ferocity and preparedness to fight and, conversely, of tolerance and respect on the part of society toward the unruly bull—whereas Chico’s trajectory of worldly exposure represents a coming to terms with the dominant, Iberian-inflected culture. Chico’s identification with the bull leads to certain acts of transgression for which the friendship between child and animal is only one possible source of motivation. This becomes clear once the boy and the bull leave the self-contained and apparently stable universe of the hacienda.

Unable to part with his best friend, Chico boards the train carrying the mature Bonito to Mexico City. When the train is stopped by a flock of sheep, Chico lets Bonito out of his cage and leads him to an adobe ruin, where the docile bull drinks from an old well. However, upon being pursued by Miguel and accompanying horsemen, Bonito charges into a nearby town and into

a cantina, where he is unsuccessfully barricaded. The irrepressible Bonito must now face the local authorities: after destroying the market in the town plaza, with apparently “good intentions,” since he pauses to nibble at tortillas, he is about to be shot by policemen while the town priest looks on. Miguel averts Bonito’s premature and unbefitting death, leaving Bonito to charge after the priest, a scene with anticlerical overtones that would not have been out of alignment with Mexican screen comedy at the time. Only Chico is successful in impeding Bonito’s blasphemous entry into the town church, by gently whistling the bull into submission, as he has done since childhood.

After witnessing two subsequent, ominous signs of death—vultures swarming around the truck that carries Bonito to his appointed destination, and a meat van full of carcasses in the streets of Mexico City—Chico makes one last, frustrated attempt to free Bonito from the corral inside the bullring, whereupon he is discovered and brutally beaten by Miguel. Given the perceived futility of individual human effort in the face of a powerful institution, Chico appeals to spiritual symbols for help. During a visit to the Zócalo Cathedral on the eve of the fight, he learns to pray, like the bullfighter himself, to Cristo Rey (Christ on the Cross), as well as to the more indigenous-oriented Virgin of Guadalupe. The cultural process of *mestizaje* is thus neatly rendered in the mise-en-scène, and it receives final affirmation with the pardoning of Bonito by the president, public applause for the bullfighter (Jesús Solórzano) who was able to withstand and artfully manage Bonito’s ferocity, and gratification and relief for the tormented Chico.

This peaceful solution is reinforced by Welles’s choice of Carlos Chávez as composer for the episode’s musical sound track. Previously the director of the Mexican National Conservatory of Music, Chávez was well known for his validation of indigenous aesthetics within Mexican cultural production.⁴⁷ Classically trained as a composer and musician, he periodically incorporated indigenous instrumentation, scales, rhythms, and melodies into compositions for performance by a symphonic orchestra. His score for “Sinfonía India” (“Indian Symphony,” 1935), which premiered with the CBS Radio Orchestra in New York in 1936, calls for indigenous instruments such as rasps, rattles, the *grijutian* (a string of deer hooves), and the *tenabari* (a string of butterfly cocoons), in addition to classical European instruments and incorporating melodies belonging to the Cora, Seri, Sonora, and Yaqui tribes.⁴⁸ This type of composition required preliminary ethnographic research as well as a modern interpretation of classical tradition. Doubtless, the score for “My Friend Bonito” would also have involved the fusion of native with European elements; this, together with Chávez’s various official posts as a national cultural administrator, would have worked to foreground the state-promoted aesthetic of *mestizaje* in the episode.

Beyond the institutional barriers, both manifest and hidden, that Chico

and his four-legged friend had to confront on the way to the ring, the production team also had to improvise solutions to social constraints that emerged on location with regard to the *mise-en-scène*. Foster and crew had anticipated having to dodge fierce bulls, but they were not initially aware of how the continual presence of Jesús Vásquez Plata, who played Chico, was violating social and ritual boundaries. For example, customarily, very few people other than those directly involved in the work were allowed to attend the cow *tientas* in the La Punta ring, for fear of distracting the cow and confusing the results of the “test.”⁴⁹ Moreover, the owner of La Punta, don Francisco Madrazo, was less than thrilled at having an “Indian” boy appear constantly in scenes involving bull raising: *indigenismo* and *mestizaje* might have been popular themes at the time for Mexico’s intelligentsia and popular film-going public, but they had yet to mollify strict social hierarchies, especially in rural areas. Out of respect for the ritual, and to placate those who might eventually object to the social infractions committed in the course of filming, the filmmakers appear to have shot Chico’s reaction shots to *tientas* and to Bonito’s progress separately from most of the central action. Also, a review of the unpreserved footage at UCLA archive reveals the insertion of a scene in which Chico humbly petitions “Don Luis” (the hacienda owner in the film) for permission to assist in Bonito’s branding (see fig. 15).

In many of the early scenes of the bull’s “childhood” shot at La Punta, one senses Floyd Crosby’s hand rather than that of Orson Welles in the visual style, which features largely frontal angles and tableau-like shots, with the camera positioned just below eye level and the action of the protagonists presented at a medium distance. At times, the framing tends toward that of Flaherty, with the pro-filmic action positioned on a low horizon, dwarfed against a vast sky. (This is not surprising, given Crosby’s prior work with Flaherty.) Although the latter was little cause for concern (it would appear again later in Welles’s own compositions in the “Jangadeiros” episode), Welles took note of Crosby’s eye-level, tableau-like shooting. In a cablegram to Foster in which he comments on the initial rushes from the branding scene, he complains that “the background is too fuzzy . . . extreme closeups I repeat extreme closeups of sweating faces, smoke of burning flesh yum yum [stop] I can’t stand it.”⁵⁰

There are signs in the footage that Welles regained his influence, indicated in the placement of objects in the extreme foreground in the branding sequences and in the dialectical alternation of high and low angles of priest and chapel in the “Blessing of the Animals” and “Chico Petitions Don Luis.” Both of these strategies evoke, without literally mimicking, Sergei Eisenstein’s treatment of the Mexican people and landscape in his unfinished *¡Que Viva México!* The latter film is devoid of the sentimentalism of “My Friend Bonito,” although it features three scenes devoted to death and mourning (the worker’s funeral in the “Prologue,” the Mayan funeral in



Figure 15. Jesús Vásquez Plata in casting photo for “My Friend Bonito,” 1941. Courtesy Orson Welles Manuscripts Collection, Lilly Library, Indiana University.

“Maguey,” and the surreal Day of the Dead sequence in “Fiesta”). Eisenstein emphasizes instead the contours of material culture, irreconcilable class conflict, and, most prominently, the rugged physiognomy of the terrain and the native and mestizo peoples, who, rigorously choreographed and posed for the camera, take on a statuesque appearance, showing little emotion within austere compositions. Film historian Eduardo de la Vega Alfaro has argued forcefully not only that these compositions are informed by Eisenstein’s previous theory and practice but that their static character also signals an effort to translate into the cinema the contemporary compositions of the great Mexican visual artists and muralists José Guadalupe Posada, David Alfaro Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, and Diego Rivera. (Apparently, Eisenstein also planned to dedicate separate episodes of the film to these artists.)⁵¹

By contrast, the *découpage* in “My Friend Bonito” emphasizes the natural and social harmony achieved through ritual, along with the Mexican national tendency toward the syncretism of Iberian and indigenous cultural elements, laced as it is with the fluid dynamism and crisscrossing lines of ac-

tion characteristic of Welles's direction. Nevertheless, Eisenstein's sojourn, a decade before the Welles-Foster expedition, left an indelible mark on Mexican cinematography. This is evidenced especially in the location cinematography of the forties, including that of Alex Phillips Sr., who helped to create the depth of field and low-angled compositions Welles desired in "My Friend Bonito."

As for the inclusion of this episode in the Latin American version of *It's All True*, Welles appears to have shown sensitivity toward stereotypes that North Americans might have had regarding bullfighting in general, and how such stereotypes might be dangerously extended to include the Mexican population as their indirect referent. U.S. screen representations invariably associate bullfighting with "passion," which, following Descartes and the Scottish philosopher Hume, is associated not with strength and determination (as in *¡Que Viva México!*) but with the nonrational, natural world, and therefore with "uncivilized" human behavior. Welles makes references to Anglo-American prejudice along these lines in the "My Friend Bonito" program of *Orson Welles' Sketchbook* (see chapter 7). One of the primary means of avoiding the gore, as Welles himself pointed out in the 1943 shooting script, was to eliminate the tragic dimension. A bloody ending would have precluded the episode's distribution as family fare in the United States. In the screenplay, a tragic tone is deflected by the routine (and, in this case, playful) activities of bull raising and by the introduction of slapstick comedy during Bonito's escape from the train. The inevitability of the fatal encounter of matador and bull evaporates with the crowd's pardon, and, unlike the majority of contemporary films on bullfighting (in both Mexico and the United States), there is little romantic subplot beyond the mutual affection transpiring between the bull and the young boy. Thus, a national, Iberian-based ritual to which North Americans might otherwise object is skillfully channeled to depict the Mexican president's democratic fulfillment of the popular will.

"JANGADEIROS," OR "FOUR MEN ON A RAFT"

The most interesting part [was] the story I made about the "jangadeiros," those people who travel down the Amazon to confer with the President of Brazil . . . it was a pure documentary.

ORSON WELLES⁵²

Like "My Friend Bonito," the "Jangadeiros" episode was shot MOS (without accompanying sound) entirely on location, mostly with a small crew and in black-and-white, with the exception of scenes shot in Rio de Janeiro in Technicolor. And, like "Bonito," it culminates in a peaceful dialogue between poor, rural, and marginal protagonists and the state, embodied by the national president. At the time of its shooting, "Jangadeiros" was the

least noticed, minimally scripted, and most revised of the three filmed episodes of *It's All True*. Yet, ironically, it was considered to be the most "salvageable" of the episodes after the bulk of the footage was located at Paramount, hence its prominence and fullness of presentation in the 1993 documentary. This salvageability is based on the amount of footage that was shot and has survived, in relation to the scenes that were planned in the script material.

In the 1943 screenplay for *It's All True* submitted by Welles to RKO, the transition to Brazil is made by way of its "side door," the equatorial Northeast and the *jangadeiros* who eke out their living there, rather than by way of what Welles called Brazil's "front lawn," the seaside casinos and beaches of Rio de Janeiro.⁵³ According to the 1943 sequencing of episodes, "Jangadeiros" is linked at its anterior "juncture" to the "Andes" episode, and it culminates in the *jangadeiros'* triumphant arrival in Guanabara Bay just in time to coincide with the Carnival celebration of February 1942. Thus, "Jangadeiros" forms a structural and symbolic bridge between the early, traumatic modernity of the conquest and the gentler, if more accommodating, modernity of contemporary Rio de Janeiro. Indeed, the democratic modernity promised by Brazilian president Vargas forms the telos, orienting the actions of the *jangadeiros* as they undertake their voyage.

In "Jangadeiros," as with "Carnaval," a contemporary set of events (albeit adapted from oral testimony and press reports, rather than witnessed by Welles himself) provides the point of departure for an investigation into the historical underpinnings and social dimensions of local and national culture. The investigation in turn is used to develop a reenactment involving the original protagonists: Manoel Olimpio Meira, or "Jacaré," official spokesperson for the raft's crew and president of the Z-1 fishing colony in Fortaleza; Jerônimo André de Souza, captain and provisional owner of the *São Pedro*; and their fishing companions Raimundo "Tatá" Correia Lima and Manuel "Preto" Pereira da Silva, treasurer of the Z-1 fishing colony. As a narrative strategy, the reenactment not only permitted events to be choreographed for dramatic effect but also allowed Welles and collaborators to provide the spectator with a closer view of the protagonists, and to bring into relief structures or patterns that were initially enshrouded in the haphazardness and spontaneity of the actual voyage. At the same time, the reenactments in both "Jangadeiros" and "Carnaval" were carried out in the immediate aftermath of the original events, which lent a freshness and intensity to the performances that helped the filmmakers to maintain a momentum and atmosphere characteristic of documentary film.

Taking advantage of the simultaneous shooting of "Carnaval" and "Jangadeiros" in Rio de Janeiro in late spring 1942 and of the dramatic possibilities allowed by their fusion, Welles decided to overlap the episodes in the narration so that the fishermen would arrive in Rio in time for Carnival,

rather than for the celebration of the Brazilian Republic on 15 November 1941, as it had actually occurred. While this temporal displacement might appear, like some of Flaherty's "slight narratives," to be the result of sheer dramatic license, on a deep structural level it opened the possibility of weaving the subtheme of the liberation of slaves, inscribed in the long time span of the *jangadeiros'* journey as narrative, into the explicitly multiracial mise-en-scène of "Carnaval." It was a *jangadeiro*, Francisco José do Nascimento, aka the "Dragon of the Sea," who brought an end to slavery in Ceará in 1884 by staging a work stoppage of *jangadeiros* charged with shuttling slaves to Fortaleza from ships anchored offshore.⁵⁴ Slavery was not abolished in the rest of Brazil until 1888, when it was proclaimed by royal decree. Nascimento's singular feat was very much a part of the oral tradition of the community in the early forties, as it still is today, and Welles wished to commemorate it as another indication of the Brazilian peoples' long-standing commitment to moral principle and democratic freedom. A plane flying over Guanabara Bay in the pro-filmic rendering of the *jangadeiros'* arrival (as can be seen in surviving footage) was to represent the flowers picked by former Afro-Brazilian slaves that had showered down upon the *São Pedro* crew as they originally entered the bay in November.⁵⁵ On a more manifest level, in providing the occasion for sweeping panoramic views of the arrival, the airplane "writes" the *jangadeiros* and the community they represent into Brazil's cosmopolitan modernity.

Thus, the reenacted voyage of the *jangadeiros* would have been elevated beyond its local significance to occupy a paradigmatic status with respect to the ideological message and related social themes of the inter-American project as a whole. Through its temporal coincidence with preparations for Carnival, the voyage comes to serve as the narrative "motivation" for the Carnival celebration, adding yet another sociopolitical dimension to the latter's interpretation. This overlap would have inscribed within the "Carnaval" episode the viewpoint of the *jangadeiros*, who, like most Latin, as well as North American, spectators are experiencing the large-scale urban celebration for the first time. Although photographic stills have survived, the footage of the four *jangadeiros*, elegantly dressed and witnessing the Carnival celebration, has yet to be located in the UCLA vaults.

In sum, the overlap sets in motion a multifaceted dynamic of dialogism not only among the episodes but also among their protagonists and the regional cultures and social spaces of which they are a part. This is fully within the spirit of the various *raids* undertaken by the *jangadeiros*, the remaining of whom recalled cultural exchanges as well as political missions taking place by way of their nautical visits to other western Atlantic locations.

At the same time, an appearance by the late Jacaré at precisely this juncture, during the planned transition between "Jangadeiros" and "Carnaval," disrupts the continuity within that transition, already disturbed by the sus-

pension of the use of Technicolor stock in the northeastern footage of the episode. It is significant that Welles chose not to conceal these sudden shifts, from black-and-white to Technicolor and from a three-member *jangada* crew to the original four-member crew, in a naturalistic fashion. Such concealment in favor of aesthetic continuity would have *negated* Jacaré's screen identity as well as his historical subjectivity within the narrative, and it would have introduced a structural bias favoring the "Carnaval" episode over "Jangadeiros." Instead, he foregrounds these discontinuities both aesthetically and in the narration and, in so doing, calls attention to the dynamic relationship obtaining between pro-filmic and para-filmic events during the film's production. In a treatment for the film, Welles states, "It is necessary to use a combination of film and stils [*sic*] during the picture, especially in the section showing the arrival of the jangadeiros in Guanabara Bay. In the narration we can say that the use of stils was necessary for a very important reason, but we don't reveal the reason until the end when the death of Jacaré is mentioned."⁵⁶ Then, in another of the more advanced treatments for "Carnaval," Welles candidly explains to the audience at the film's close, upon showing the *jangadeiros* leaving by plane for Fortaleza after witnessing Carnival,

Naturally our cameras weren't always on the spot. Some of the action we had to reconstruct. Here, for instance—before we'd finished with our work, Jacaré, the leader of the jangadeiros, had died in the sea. But this is still the end of our picture, because this is the best place we know to stop. Also, it's true. Jacaré did go back to Ceará, and, of course, he's still there—alive in the love of his fellows; still with us, like the Dragon of the Sea who told the slave traders he'd carry no more slaves.⁵⁷

In this passage, Welles seals the link, suggested by the airplane, between two pivotal periods in hemispheric history—that of abolition and that of the solidarity of sovereign nations, where dialogues between the powerful and powerless are still possible, in the face of fascist aggression; in doing so, he opens up the possibility for equivalences and thematic continuity to be established among the various episodes, including between the North American (the "Story of Jazz") and Latin American episodes.

In an early sketch of scenes for "Jangadeiros," a dialogue with the four fishermen in direct address accompanies a didactic introduction to the building of a *jangada*, fishing techniques, family life, and the "unfair division of the catch," followed by a portrayal of the "low standard of living, thus showing community."⁵⁸ These conditions provide the motivation for the *raid* to Rio, a portrayal based on Jacaré's own diary, which, it appears, was to be used as text for voice-over narration. The journey is decided upon by the fishing colony in a meeting and launched by a clamorous, crowded departure on Iracema beach. Framing the narrative is a "press conference" with the *jangadeiros*, most probably a historical reference to Edmar Morel's memorable

interview conducted near Rio de Janeiro in November 1941, shot with the crew in Fortaleza after Jacaré's death. In the original plan, this press conference might have come at the beginning of the episode, where it would have provided a convenient point of departure for the dialogues with the victorious *jangadeiros*, who would then begin to tell their story in "flashback." However, without Jacaré at the conference to begin with, the analeptic narration of the *jangadeiros'* journey from Fortaleza to Rio no longer made narrative sense.

In the wake of the hiatus in the production and its impact on the film's plot, Jacaré's persona was transformed into a floating signifier of leadership and historical motivation. Nevertheless, it appears that the problem of how to narrate the voyage in Jacaré's absence was never fully solved. To retain the historical integrity of the episode, Welles anchors Jacaré as signifier in a series of fictional devices designed to compensate for his absence. These include the iconic substitution of Jacaré's brother, João "Jacaré," for Jacaré in his role as community leader,⁵⁹ as well as the introduction of the death of a young *jangadeiro* at sea as a metaphor for Jacaré's death and an additional, more melodramatic, pretext for the *raid*. However, lacking the charisma and *photogénie* of his brother, João Jacaré does not appear as prominently in the footage as might have been planned, and the emphasis shifts to Jerônimo's cousin Sobrinho in the role of the young *jangadeiro* (see fig. 16).

In the revised plot structure, the love story between the young fisherman and his bride, including his fatal accident and its aftermath, is grafted onto the original structure so that the news of his death will coincide structurally and symbolically with a depiction of the unfair division of the catch, which had strongly motivated the original voyage.⁶⁰ The juxtaposition of these events urges a comparison: the division of the catch, determined by human agency, is no more fair to the *jangadeiro* family than the premature death of a young man who loses his life against the forces of nature. According to Edmar Morel, a close friend of the *jangadeiros* and a native expert in these matters, for every six fish an individual *jangadeiro* was able to catch, five were given to the *jangada* owner, and the *jangadeiro* kept one.⁶¹ This exploitation (illustrated in close-up in the footage), combined with the uncompensated and inherent dangers of the job (emblemized in the injustice of young Sobrinho's death with its dire consequences for his bride, Francisca), prompts the members of the fishing colony in "The Meeting" scene to vote for the "four" *jangadeiros'* departure to Rio de Janeiro to request the inclusion of all fishermen in the new Vargas social security legislation.

Interestingly, and judging from the pronounced gestures and ardent expressions of the meeting leaders, especially those of the tall, thin *jangadeiro* Manuel Frade, who later traveled with Jerônimo and the others by *jangada* to Porto Alegre and Buenos Aires, the tenor of this meeting resembles more a move to *unionize* than to select delegates for a diplomatic voyage. It is not



Figure 16. *Jangadeiros* (left to right): João Jacaré, Jerônimo, Manuel "Preto," and Raimundo "Tatá" in a frame enlargement from "Jangadeiros." Courtesy Richard Wilson—Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.

difficult to imagine that outspoken and committed *jangadeiros* such as Frade and Jerônimo would have seized the occasion of the film shoot to publicly voice their deeper, more fundamental concerns over their daily exploitation as a social class to what they knew to be an international film audience. This is especially interesting given that Vargas had already signed some of Jacaré's demands into legislation at the time of the shooting, and that with the probable use of *jangadeiro* vernacular in this scene, this stronger message may well have been verbally spelled out, remaining visible within the frame (yet unrecorded on a sound track), quite possibly unbeknownst to Welles and crew (see figure 33, page 221).

The "love story" also provides a means of indirectly displaying the daily domestic and seafaring life of the *jangadeiro* community without the invasiveness and detachment of a more thoroughly ethnographic approach. Owing to the skillful use of framing, direction of actors, and visual point of view, it reaches beyond the threshold of a Flaherty-type "slight narrative" in the individuation of characters, for although we have intimate portrayals of daily and family life in Flaherty's films, most of his subjects rarely cease to be ethnographic subjects. They figure for the audience as cultural others owing to their visible difference, or become emblematic of humankind. Like

Fante's "Love Story," in adding a ritualistic dimension (courtship, marriage, death, and burial) to the documentary portrayal of the community, the *jangadeiros'* "love story" sets up culturally accessible points of identification for the foreign spectator. This has the effect of involving the spectator more deeply in the tragedy of the young *jangadeiro's* death when it occurs, while engaging the nonprofessional actors more intensively in the dramatization of their frugal existence. Indeed, some members of the community recently recalled the love story in "Jangadeiros" as a dramatization of the romance between a Portuguese sailor and a beautiful native woman named Iracema (an anagram of "America") featured in the eponymous nineteenth-century novel by *cearense* author José de Alencar.⁶² Of course, there is no evidence of Welles and collaborators ever having derived story material from that novel. More plausibly—and more potently for contemporary reception in Brazil—the love story of "Jangadeiros" elaborates upon the story of a young woman and her fiancé (played by Bahian musician Dorival Caymmi) in a semi-documentary about the *jangadeiros'* way of life produced by the Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda in Fortaleza, titled *A Jangada Voltou Só* (*The Jangada Returned Alone*, directed by Rui Santos, 1941) and released shortly after the crew of the *São Pedro* met with President Getúlio Vargas in Rio.⁶³

There is little doubt that what in the short run must have seemed like a tremendous handicap—the loss of full support for the shoot from RKO—in the long run took Welles and his collaborators in creative directions they never would have ventured into had they worked with the full RKO crew and apparatus at the Fortaleza location. Without access to a soundstage, the crew simulated a storm at sea by placing the *jangada* on trestles on the beach and throwing buckets of water at the protagonists. They were working without electricity, so additional and directional illumination could only be obtained by manipulating the natural refraction of light off the surface of improvised aluminum "reflector" panels, held up by local production assistants.

Moreover, still reeling from the loss of Jacaré, Welles saw the need to push even further to fashion a narrative from material within the observable world of the fishing colony. A didactic epic narrative in which Jacaré's viewpoint prevailed was thus transformed into a partly allegorical, partly mimetic melodrama involving individual tragedy, collective mourning, class action, and a generational transfer of power and hope, prior to the reenacted arrival in Rio, where we see Jacaré reappear on film. In this way, the love story never overshadows the daily events and political and economic interests of the collectivity.

The "final" sequence of scenes as planned while on location is as follows (based on a review of the nitrate footage and written documents). "Making the *Jangada*": Here, we see at close range the construction of a *jangada* named the *São Pedro*, which will become the vessel used by the four *jangadeiros* to fish at sea. (The original *São Pedro*, which had been used to film the arrival

in Rio, remained there, and a different *jangada* had to be used for the north-eastern shoot.) The new *jangada* is launched. Scenes of "Fishing" are to be intercut with scenes of "Lace Making" on the shore. The "Courtship" includes Sobrinho and Francisca frolicking on a tiny *jangada*. Sobrinho proposes to Francisca as she is washing clothes by the beach. He builds a thatched house out of palm leaves for them to live in. "The Wedding" of the young couple takes place in the chapel at Mucuripe. Scenes of "Domestic Life": Francisca dyes Sobrinho's clothes in cashew juice in a vat (which makes them water-repellent), with other women. Sobrinho cuts coconuts from a tree and tries his hand at hunting (unsuccessfully). Francisca cuts the coconut open and serves Sobrinho his lunch inside their hut. Sobrinho returns to fishing, and Francisca makes lace with the other women (see fig. 17).

Here, the narrative takes a sharp turn, away from the vectors of "construction" (literal and symbolic) into the spiral of loss and the exploitation of the fishermen. There is an "Accident of the *São Pedro* at Sea" during a fishing *raid* (several days on high seas). Sobrinho, like Jacaré, is the *proeiro*, or prow man, the one who must extricate the mast from under the water, but he does not resurface. Other fishermen dive into the water in the attempt to save him. The *jangadas* "Return to Shore" and are rolled up on the beach, and the catch of each raft is divided. The three surviving *jangadeiros*, Tatá, Manuel "Preto," and Jerônimo, bring the news of Sobrinho's disappearance to Francisca and her grandmother, who have been waiting at the edge of the water ("Bringing the News"). An alternate setup of this scene, with the *jangadeiros* approaching Francisca when she is alone inside the hut, was shot at Itapoã (Bahia), and was used in the 1993 reconstruction to depict the leave-taking of the *jangadeiros* as they set out for their *raid* to Rio.

Another turning point, confrontation with the evidence of Sobrinho's loss, brings a movement toward unity and action in the community. "Finding the Body": As fishing nets are being repaired and hung out to dry, a young girl, four or five years old, finds Sobrinho's corpse among the rocks at Volta da Jurema, a point separating Iracema and Mucuripe beaches. She runs, crying, among the fishing nets to take the news of the discovery to Francisca and to Sobrinho's grandmother, on the porch of the grandmother's house. Members of the colony run from various directions down to the beach to extricate the body from the water. The three surviving *jangadeiros*, aided by their colleagues, carry the corpse to the shore.

"The Funeral": The entire Z-2 colony is enlisted in the shooting of the funeral procession up the uninhabited Proapa dune to a small cemetery at the top, with the men leading and the women and young girls following. Sobrinho's body, using what film participants have called the "Judas," or dummy, has been placed in a hammock for burial, following indigenous tradition. Many participants in this scene remember the "Judas" as standing in for Jacaré's body, making a metonymic play between the fictional character of



Figure 17. Production still: Francisca Moreira da Silva on the set of “Jangadeiros,” 1942. Courtesy Cinemateca Brasileira, São Paulo, Brazil.

Sobrinho and their lost leader. As if to underscore this interpretive possibility, Jacaré’s mother, sister, and niece are shown together in a low-angled shot, witnessing the burial (see fig. 18). Indeed, shot only one month after Jacaré’s disappearance, the funeral scene must have provided much-needed catharsis for a community in mourning. Once the mourners have reached the makeshift cemetery at the top of the dune, Jerônimo offers a eulogy as the character-participants as well as community members bow their heads in dramatic, tightly framed low-angled shots. “The Meeting”: Led by Jerônimo and others, the fishermen discuss what should be done to rectify the unfairness of the distribution of the catch and the needless suffering of those who lose able-bodied members of their families at sea. They decide that the three *jangadeiros* should go to Rio to meet with President Vargas.

As a penultimate turning point, there is “The Departure.” With the older



Figure 18. Manoel Jacaré's mother, niece, and sister in frame enlargement from "Jangadeiros." Courtesy Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.

members of the community standing watch, the crew of the *São Pedro* embrace their loved ones as they are escorted by the entire fishing colony to the edge of the water. They launch the *jangada* and eventually disappear on the horizon. This is followed by "The Voyage," which includes stops to uninhabited places along the northeastern coast, where the *jangadeiros* stop to fetch water, cook, and sleep among the rocks, as well as at thriving urban centers such as Olinda, near Recife, and Salvador, Bahia; the *jangadeiros* are able to make pilgrimages to monasteries and churches to give thanks and to obtain spiritual strength to continue on their journey. In Jacaré's diary, there is also a reference to an encounter with *saveiro* fishermen along the coast of Bahia outside of Salvador. Like the *jangada*, the *saveiro* is a small sailing vessel made out of a hollowed tree trunk, rather than logs joined together to form a raft. Significantly, Welles decided to shoot a scene of such an encounter on the Bahian coast, where we see the *jangadeiros* comparing notes with local fishermen. In actuality, such encounters during the *raid* were also opportunities for the *jangadeiros*, and especially Jacaré, to explain their political strategy with others of their kind who suffered under similar working

conditions. Twenty years later, shooting at Itapoã, one of Welles's locations for the film, Bahian-born filmmaker Glauber Rocha would dramatize the unfair division of the catch and the loss of a young fisherman at sea in *Barravento* (*The Turning Wind*, 1962).

"The Arrival": After a particularly stormy stretch to the south of Salvador, in which the *jangadeiros* confronted shark-infested waters during the original voyage (this detail obviously could not be staged), the *São Pedro* reaches the placid waters near Rio de Janeiro. It is spotted by tourists lounging on the beach in Copacabana and makes its way into Guanabara Bay, where it is escorted by every type of craft, military and civilian, to the main wharf at Praça Mauá. Carnival has just begun, and after being lifted out of the water, the *jangada*, decked with the four sea-drenched fisherman, is converted into a celebratory float, in a parade full of fantasy scenes and exuberant revelers making their way to the presidential palace. (These last scenes were shot in Technicolor by the RKO crew in Rio.) It should be noted that because Welles attributed a strong role to editing in the precise syntax of the episode and had only one precious opportunity to shoot on location, a few scenes, such as Sobrinho's "hunting," the alternative "Bringing the News" scene, the "Press Conference," and some of the shots to be used in either "The Funeral" or "The Departure" were shot either as experiments or as "extra coverage."⁶⁴ Such scenes continue to bear an uncertain syntactical relationship to the core fictional and reenacted scenes.

Even though Welles could not achieve much camera movement while shooting in the Northeast, he was able to produce visual compositions of varying focal lengths by using a 35mm Eyemo (borrowed from the local Abafilm photographic studio) to take choker close-ups of certain manual activities, such as *jangada* making, *samburá* (fish basket) making, lace making, and head shots of characters during the "Bringing the News" and "Departure" scenes. The Eyemo was also used so that the crew could board a launch, as well as a derrick in the old seaport of Fortaleza, to shoot better views of the fishing scenes.⁶⁵ These shots were to be intercut with medium to long panoramic compositions filmed under more stable conditions with the silent Mitchell camera (on loan from Cinédia Studio in Rio) in the sand and on the rocks along the shore. It is truly remarkable that under such rudimentary and jerry-rigged conditions, Welles and crew were able to articulate a series of shots that not only could be joined together into coherent scenes and phrases but also exhibited an expressive lyricism, found in neorealist experiments shot with more mobile and lightweight equipment a few years later, in both Italy and South America.⁶⁶

As in "My Friend Bonito," some individual shots in "Jangadeiros" strongly evoke the work of Eisenstein in Mexico, particularly the low-angled two- and three-shots of stoic mourners at "The Funeral" and well-wishers at "The Departure." In its achievement of sustained tension on the diagonal within the

frame, the funeral procession is also reminiscent of Eisenstein's other films, especially *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925), when the people of Odessa gather on the quay to pay their respects to the martyred sailor Vakulinchuk, and, later, *Ivan Grozny* (*Ivan the Terrible*, 1943), when the citizens of Moscow arrive in an endless stream at the monastery, to persuade Czar Ivan to return to the throne (though Welles himself gave the latter film an unfavorable review) (see fig. 19).⁶⁷ The lack of camera mobility in "Jangadeiros" also would have led to a syntactical contrast between the extreme close-ups and two- and three-shots of the characters, and the longer shots of the multitude on the beach and on the dune, a technique that figures prominently in Eisenstein's films. Not surprisingly, Flaherty's influence is also present, especially in the low, wide-angled shots of the *jangadeiros* during the *raid* at sea, and when they seek water across vast expanses of dune and sky—evoking similar compositions in *Man of Aran*, a film greatly admired by Welles.

Scanning the rushes more closely, however, one notes that the editing sequence adumbrated in the shots corresponds less to Eisenstein's concept of dialectical montage, involving sharp contrasts and the "collision" of shots (which need not be derived from the same diegetic space), than to a principle of "convergence," as film editor Ed Marx called it, where shots of varying focal lengths and different angles converge after editing to form an organic whole. As a result, the editing scheme suggested by the "Jangadeiros" footage conforms more to the "cognitive linkage of frames" by the viewer, proposed by Soviet filmmaker and theorist Vsevolod Pudovkin, to form a "film phrase," with each shot building thematically and compositionally on the next.⁶⁸ Thus, without indulging in the diegetic realism achieved by Flaherty in *Man of Aran*, where spatiotemporal gaps are bridged by more gradual shifts in composition and focal length, Welles is able to create a style of shooting and editing that is semantically productive, yet more harmonious than what might have been allowed by Eisenstein's approach to montage.

Equally interesting are the strong resemblances in composition between shots in the "Funeral" sequence and scenes from Welles's own *Magnificent Ambersons*. In entirely different narrative and geographic contexts, Welles uses the low-angled choker close-ups in a montage of convergence in which the young George Amberson is commented on by disapproving faces and remarks of gossiping townsfolk, and then repeats this strategy for the ennoblement of very poor and rustic members of the fishing colony, in the two- and three-shots of mourners at Sobrinho's funeral. As the *jangadeiros* pay their last respects to Sobrinho (or Jacaré) as he is being laid in the ground, Welles also repeats the unorthodox setup seen in *Magnificent Ambersons*, where the camera adopts the viewpoint of George's dead father, Wilbur Minafer, surveying his surviving family members from an open coffin. More than any other aspect of the *mise-en-scène*, the convergence of the mourners' penetrating gazes and the phenomenally impossible viewpoint of the dead *jan-*



Figure 19. Frame enlargement of the funeral procession in “Jangadeiros.” Courtesy Richard Wilson—Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.

gadeiro solder the tragedy of the “love story” to its allegorical referent, the loss of Jacaré—who, as leader, was an expression of the community’s hard work, suffering, and determination to change their conditions. What is especially striking in this intertextual comparison is the way in which Welles is able to resignify these shot compositions, eliciting from the spectator not the skepticism and distancing felt toward the characters of *The Magnificent Ambersons* but reverence and empathetic understanding.⁶⁹

As noted in chapter 1, there is no evidence or recollection by Brazilian and American witnesses that any sound was recorded on location. Whether or not Welles was able to find a suitable setting in which to record sound in Fortaleza, he had recourse only to silent filming equipment, a few lenses and filters, and a tripod with which to shoot visual material mostly at outdoor locations, without any electricity. Under these circumstances, it is understandable that Welles would have preferred to record the best images possible on film, then record sound to match those images with more advanced (and more compatible for release purposes) sound technology once he was back in Hollywood.

This hypothesis is supported by Welles’s propensity in later years for work-

ing with postsynchronized sound (both verbal and musical), a propensity that is grounded in his conception of sound and image as two realms of creation of equal importance, and thus is only partially explained by tight budgets and adverse physical conditions on location. *The Lady from Shanghai*, *Macbeth* (1948), and *Othello* all show strong evidence of this technique and of the pleasure Welles took in toying with sound-image conjunctions and disjunctions in the process.⁷⁰ Yet it is more forcefully supported by similar plans for “Carnaval” and by the testimony of Francisca Moreira da Silva (the young “bride”) with respect to Welles’s invitation that she travel to Hollywood with the other principal actors after the Northeastern shoot to record dialogue for the episode.⁷¹ Evidently, although no sound was recorded, Welles was shooting with a musical accompaniment, as well as a dialogue track in mind.

To date, I have not been able to locate any documents containing dialogue written for Francisca, Sobrinho, and the others after Jacaré’s death and the revision of the plot to include the love story. Yet it is clear from the protagonists’ mouthing of words in certain surviving shots and from other scenes, in which the pro-filmic action is insufficiently explicit to be decoded effectively by most spectators beyond the denotative level, that Welles conceived of supplementing this action with dialogue or voice-over narration. For example, there is the alternative scene for “Bringing the News” (shot in Bahia) in which the three *jangadeiros* arrive at Francisca’s *palhoça* (straw hut), remove their hats, and let her know, facing her in an over-the-shoulder shot, that Sobrinho is missing; there is also the eulogy given by Jerônimo at Sobrinho/Jacaré’s funeral on top of the dune, in which he appears, from reading his lips, to be simply reciting the Lord’s Prayer (hence the bowed heads of all those present). At the other extreme are more sociohistorically grounded scenes, such as “The Division of the Catch” and “The Meeting,” where uninitiated viewers would require explanations delivered in either voice-over narration or postsynchronized dialogue (respectively) to keep up with the plot and to grasp the significance of the events for the community. Finally, there are scenes where dialogue is not necessary for the communication of information but clearly would have added to the dramatic effect, such as the “Finding the Body” scene, in which the little girl runs up to Francisca to announce her spotting of Sobrinho’s body in the water.

In the original treatment for the episode, Welles planned to use the four *jangadeiros* throughout to convey important information both in voice-over narration and on camera in testimonial form. Without a doubt, Jacaré’s death provoked a significant change in the modes of narration used to explain how the *jangadeiros* lived, and just what motivated them to make the voyage. As for the musical sound track, it appears that Welles had hoped to use local, vernacular forms linked to the fishing community as much as possible. However, beyond the *côco* (coconut) dance and musical round that Welles witnessed during his first visit to Fortaleza in March 1942, very few local sources

of music were found by screenwriter and researcher Robert Meltzer beyond popular songs from Rio on the subject of *jangadeiros*. The plan was to record as many of these songs as possible in Rio at the Urca Casino.⁷² Included in this motley cache of folk music were the immensely popular ballads by Bahian composer and musician Dorival Caymmi, who recalls meeting with Welles to discuss his music.⁷³ His hit songs “O Mar” (“The Sea”), “É Doce Morrer no Mar” (“How Sweet to Die in the Sea”), and “A Jangada Voltou Só” (“The Jangada Returned Alone”) were featured in Rui Santos’s eponymous film, *A Jangada Voltou Só*.

Years later, Aluísio de Alencar Pinto, the brother of Fernando Pinto, Welles’s host in Ceará, and a classically trained pianist and musicologist who collected and recorded the vernacular music of the coastal Northeast, informed the production team for the 1993 reconstruction that the most appropriate music for the “Funeral” sequence would be a *cantiga*, or medieval-style chant without instrumentation.⁷⁴ Although the sound track for the reconstruction of this sequence utilized percussion—kettle drums and a tambourine, followed by a melancholic melody intoned mainly by reed instruments—it is interesting to note the analogy between the *cantiga* concept and the contemporary compositions of Heitor Villa-Lobos, whom Welles had had in mind for the composer and arranger of the sound track for “Jangadeiros.” Villa-Lobos’s compositions often consist of a simple melodic line for vocals or guitar, equally wistful in tone but more lyrical in style than the *cantiga*, based on traditional *modinhas*, or popular Brazilian songs of the nineteenth century.⁷⁵ In either case, the pristine melodic line in Welles’s version would have been rooted in vernacular tradition, yet contrasted noticeably with the dense instrumentation and exuberant tones of the samba music in “Carnaval.” Like Carlos Chávez, the classically trained, Rio-born Villa-Lobos was known for his talent at integrating indigenous and popular folk songs and dance rhythms into modern orchestral compositions, thereby creating a unified sense of the “national” through transregional and transatlantic dialogue in musical form.⁷⁶

“CARNAVAL”

Samba is liberty, without blood or war.

CANDEIA⁷⁷

In many ways, “Carnaval” is the surprise episode of *It’s All True* (to pun on the “surprise package” opened by Donald Duck in Walt Disney’s film *The Three Caballeros*, 1945).⁷⁸ Although it was commissioned by the OCIAA at the request of the Brazilian government and initially received the full support of RKO (as an expeditious means of contributing to the Good Neighbor Policy), “Carnaval” became a primary source of discord between Welles and

officials of the Brazilian Departamento do Imprensa e Propaganda, on one hand, and Welles and RKO Studio, on the other.⁷⁹ Paradoxically, the public visibility of the “Carnaval” shoot along with its close supervision by the three agencies involved in its production—all signs of the episode’s historic timeliness, as well as of unprecedented U.S.-Brazilian cultural cooperation—had the effect of exacerbating the friction between Welles and his sponsors. With the exception of the OCIAA, they responded unfavorably to his unorthodox approach to the subject matter, as well as the prominence in the film of so many artists and nonprofessional performers of different racial phenotypes.

The ostensible mission of “Carnaval” was to promote American tourism to Brazil, which, compared with Central America and the Caribbean, was still relatively unknown to North Americans in the thirties, save the occasional merchant sailor who happened to dock near the Amazon or Rio de Janeiro. Yet what began as a straightforward documentary on the Carnival festivities soon became a cultural laboratory-in-motion in which Welles, applying Robert Flaherty’s principle of “non-preconception,”⁸⁰ immersed himself as a participant observer. Contrary to the perceptions of the RKO production supervisor, Lynn Shores, this immersion was hardly due to by lack of discipline or self-indulgence. Rather, as Welles explained in a treatment submitted to RKO, it was only through direct observation of the celebration and extensive consultation with local experts that he and his creative staff could obtain sufficient understanding of the sociocultural logic of Carnival to devise a narrative, structural logic that would make sense of the documentary material while remaining true to the historical origins and social multidimensionality of its main ingredient: samba music.⁸¹

Like American jazz, samba involves a fusion of African rhythms, and occasionally lyrics in Yoruba or Nagô, with indigenous and Portuguese rhythms and tonal modulations. It can take many forms, from the more ritualistic *marcha* (or “marching band” form), used only during the Carnival festivities, to the intimate turn-of-the-century *choro* (analogous to ragtime) and the popular *samba de enredo* (or samba with a plotline). Whereas *marchas* are repeated each year and tend to be handed down from generation to generation (“Mamãe eu quero,” immortalized by Carmen Miranda and parodied by Mickey Rooney in the early forties, is just such a song), the *samba de enredo* takes on allegorical dimensions, and although it is performed as an original presentation by a samba school in the festive parade, it is frequently released in recordings several months prior to the event so that the general public can learn the lyrics and vote for its popular favorite. “Saudades da Amélia,” by Ataulpho Alves, and “Adeus, Praça Onze,” by Herivelto Martins and Grande Othelo, were both sambas de enredo that won the popular vote for 1942, in first and second place, respectively.

Through research conducted by Welles and other North Americans, such as screenwriter Robert Meltzer and U.S. photographer Genevieve Naylor, in

tandem with the Brazilian specialists mentioned in chapter 1, Welles came to be fascinated by these different forms of samba: their spatiotemporal positioning with respect to the flow of Carnival and year-round urban entertainment, and their semiotic and aesthetic potential for both structuring and supplementing the reams of documentary material filmed on black-and-white and Technicolor negative. As a result, Carnival is presented in *It's All True* not as a singular or rarefied phenomenon but as a plural form of cultural practice across different geosocial sectors of Rio de Janeiro, then undergoing transformation in response to urban expansion and changes in the political sphere as the Estado Novo began to align with the Allied forces and at the same time mold social behavior and public cultural expression.

As in "Jangadeiros," staged reenactments are used in "Carnaval" to deepen our access to recent historical events, in this case, events recorded on film and supplemented by synchronized musical recordings that could be used during the editing process. Because it was to contain little dialogue and Welles planned to rely on editing strategies and, above all, on the creative manipulation of the musical sound track for the arrangement of shot footage into a "plot," "Carnaval" was the most completely shot of the Latin American episodes at the time of the suspension. As well, the close yet complex relationship conceived between sound and image meant that all musical recording had to be completed while on location in Brazil—and it was, thanks to the local Odeon studios, the acoustical space of the Urca Cassino, and the availability of an RKO sound truck for direct recording by technician John Cass.

At the same time, this episode remains the most elusive for the film historian who tries to ascertain what would have been its actual content and style. As Welles insisted to RKO late in the shooting process, the episode could be fully structured only at the editing stage, and given the technical requirements of sound-image relations (direct and playback material had to be synched with the image, and several sequences were to involve crosscutting), this could be done only in Hollywood.⁸² Therefore, there is no definitive screenplay for the episode, and the suspension obviously precluded the kind of structuring that Welles had in mind. This situation is compounded by the fact that the controversies over the production and the negative reputation given to the project by Shores led to a certain carelessness toward the "Carnaval" footage after its return to Hollywood. Its cannibalization by RKO and deliberate damage (by Paramount) in the late sixties made it the most truncated of the three shot episodes as a result. (See appendix 2 for details on surviving footage.)

Nevertheless, Welles did draft a comprehensive treatment for "Carnaval" to reassure RKO of the viability of the project at the point when RKO vice president Reisman was dispatched to Brazil and Reisman was under heavy fire to cut expenses and wrap the shoot. Although not a sterling blueprint



Figure 20. Easter procession in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, 1942. Photograph by Genevieve Naylor. Courtesy Peter Reznikoff.

for what Welles might have done had he retained access to the footage in the forties, this treatment does furnish important clues to the semantic potential of the different musical forms within their sociohistorical contexts of performance, as well as general aesthetic and organizational principles guiding the episode's construction. It also provides an early indication of Welles's intention to appear as himself, an American tourist, in the film.

In addition to this treatment, there is the surviving footage itself, mostly black-and-white, which, first, reveals the notion of incorporating the religious counterpoint to "Carnaval," the Holy Week observances in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais (see fig. 20). As a location for ethnographic documentation, Ouro

Preto also would have provided a geohistorical counterpoint to the exuberant, modern-day capital of Rio de Janeiro. Second, the footage shot by the second-unit crew during Carnival itself, at times directed by Welles and at times by Robert Meltzer, reveals an attempt at achieving thorough coverage of different Carnival sites of celebration, both public and private, working-class and urban-cosmopolitan. It also reaches beyond the scope of mere documentary (which Welles uses interchangeably in this context with “travelogue”) to provide a formally innovative (low, canted, instead of level angles) and unprecedentedly intimate view (close two-shots, and extreme close-ups of dancing feet and jubilant faces) of Brazilians during their most nationally significant ritual celebration. Finally, although the original sound footage has apparently not survived the transfer among studio vaults and could very well have been destroyed for allegedly “legal” reasons in the late sixties, fortunately, all the songs that were to appear in “Carnaval” either are well known and still sung during Carnival today or were composed and already recorded upon Welles’s arrival in Brazil. Thus, it is possible, listening to these other recordings, to appreciate the contrasts and juxtapositions Welles had in mind.

Welles himself attributed the lack of a standard screenplay to the fact that this episode was to be the cinematic equivalent of a “feature story” (as in a magazine) and as such would have very little dialogue. Yet like its literary model, it would provide a panoramic, kaleidoscopic view of its subject so as to pique the viewer’s interest in the broader society and culture of which it was a representative part. In cinematic terms, “Carnaval” might just as easily be described as a “city symphony,” one of the earliest and most avant-garde genres of documentary, initiated by Brazilian-born filmmaker Alberto Cavalcanti with *Rien que les heures* in Paris (1926) and Walter Ruttmann with *Berlin: The Symphony of a Great City* (1927) during the silent period.⁸³ The city symphony model was reiterated and reinterpreted in documentary practice elsewhere in Europe (especially Britain) and in the Americas throughout the twentieth century.

In “Carnaval,” Welles appears to have been familiar not only with this genre itself but also with British documentarian John Grierson’s definition of it as a form “concerned with the orchestration of movement. It sees the screen *in terms of flow and does not permit the flow to be broken*. Episodes and events, if they are included in the action, are integrated in the flow.”⁸⁴ What is more significant is that in designing his symphonic treatment of urban space and musical practice (understood as a dialogue between performer and audience), Welles avoided a common pitfall of the genre signaled by Grierson: the overly superficial sequencing of images for aesthetic “effect,” devoid of social or historical insight. Instead, he combines the three alternative approaches to rendering shot material into a “plot,” as described by Grierson: “a musical or non-literary method” (here, the rhythm and sequencing of images is determined by the rhythms and phrasings on “Carnaval’s” musical

track); “a dramatic method with clashing forces” (the “Praça Onze” sequence described later in this chapter is the best example of this approach); and “a poetic, contemplative, and altogether literary method.” Interestingly, Grierson cites Eisenstein’s static compositions in *¡Que Viva Mexico!* as an example of the last approach.⁸⁵ In “Carnaval,” it is illustrated in the sentimental “Ave Maria no Morro” prelude to the samba school practice as the fires to warm the *tamborins* are lit one by one, and in the atmospheric, synecdochic close to the Carnival festivities, where a street sign bearing the name “Praça Onze” dangles from its post, foreshadowing the historic end of Praça Onze as an urban location for musical congregation.

The Favela as Vantage Point

Fittingly (but unexpectedly for the forties spectator), the episode opens with a panoramic view of Rio de Janeiro as seen from the hilltop shantytowns, or favelas. In this scene, Rio de Janeiro is compared with New Orleans as a place where a popular form of Afro- and European-based music evolves, migrating out of the ghetto to more touristic venues of performance. The Technicolor crew was taken to the favelas to shoot footage for this scene, and a portion of that footage appears in the 1993 documentary reconstruction. This opening strategy would reappear years later in Marcel Camus’s *Orfeu Negro* (*Black Orpheus*, 1959), which, like “Carnaval,” is set during Carnival in Rio de Janeiro, and many of whose characters (and some actors) are favela dwellers. The following scenes are historically set a few weeks before the actual Carnival celebration so as to expose the uninitiated viewer to the collective process of preparing for the spectacle witnessed by the public during the festivities. Welles wished to show the *labor* that leads up to the seemingly boundless party making of people at leisure, much in the same way that we see the making of the *jangada São Pedro* prior to the fishing scenes of “Jangadeiros.” He also respected phenomenal practice by building the spectacle from the neighborhood and “grass roots” outward, validating the favela as a site of popular knowledge, memory, and artistic talent.

Samba Practice (Shot on the Soundstage at Cinédia Studio)

The camera moves in to show us a small house with a yard that is used by a samba school for practice. As evening descends on the hilltop, the samba school flag is raised on the flagpole to the sound of “Ave Maria no Morro.” Based on Schubert’s “Ave Maria” and composed by Herivelto Martins, the song verbalizes the notion visually depicted in the previous panoramic scene that although these are but humble shacks, they have a view that corresponds to skyscrapers and are positioned “closer to heaven.” Ruth, the young daughter of the samba school president, is looking out the window at the close of

evening prayer when she is spotted by a flirtatious Grande Othelo, arriving just in time for samba practice spots. In its deep structure, this scene combines the reverent Catholicism of favela dwellers (a political as well as an ethnographic move) with an Afro-Brazilian archetype, the *malandro*, who also displays certain qualities of the Afro-Brazilian deity Exú.⁸⁶ The scene segues into the “Sinfônia dos Tamborins,” or “Symphony of the Hand Drums,” in which the musicians light small fires in the patio to heat the drum skins, which they begin to play softly. The “Sinfônia” scene, composed and choreographed by Herivelto Martins, was shot in one fluid take, and Martins recalled that Othelo was so moved by the sight of the *tamborim* orchestra that he wept upon entering the set.⁸⁷

Then, in the first of a series of transitions in which structural continuity is provided by the music alongside a contrastive shift in protagonism and setting on the image track, the samba school performance of a new song for Carnival, “Se Alguem Disse” (“If Someone Said”), bleeds on the sound track over to a radio station in downtown Rio, where the same song is performed by well-known singer Emilinha Borba without missing a beat.⁸⁸ While providing a pertinent juxtaposition of neighborhood vernacular with modern commercial performance, and of marginal with mainstream Rio, this scene emphatically establishes the favela musician as the *author* of popular, mediated samba, a statement that would not be made so explicitly on the Brazilian screen until the release of Nelson Pereira dos Santos’s tragic tale of a plagiarized and impoverished samba composer in *Rio, Zona Norte* (*Rio, Northern Zone*), starring Grande Othelo, in 1957.

Anatomy of Samba

To further develop the spectator’s understanding of the music itself (which by this point provides much more than background material in the film), Welles decided to suspend the primary diegesis and take time out for an analytical presentation of the “anatomy of samba,” so as to thoroughly ground the spectator in its instrumental and rhythmic aspects prior to proceeding with the depiction of its manifestations in everyday and ritual life. Close-ups of the various instruments, such as the *surdo* (big bass drum), *pandeiro* (tambourine), *cuica* (catgut stick drum), *agôgô* (twin bells), and *tamborim* (hand drum), are supported by a voice-over narration (presumably by Welles himself). Welles was careful to note in the treatment that he wished this sequence to be deliberately “amusing” so as not to fall into the tedious pedantry of the “illustrated lecture.”⁸⁹ (An approximation of this “anatomy” can be heard in Welles’s repartee with Carmen Miranda on the “Brazil” program of the *Hello Americans* series, in which we hear Welles pretending to be confused, especially over the false cognate “tamborim” instrument, yet singing Ary Barroso’s “O Tabuleiro da Baiana” [“On the Bahiana’s Tray”] in perfect Portuguese.)

The “anatomy” sequence segues into a “comedy trick montage of animated props” related to the Carnival celebration, in which we are to witness the use of serpentine, masks, and *lança-perfume* (perfume-shooters) that are filled with ether.⁹⁰ A few of these shots of anonymous Carnival revelers in the midst of action staged for the camera appear to have survived in Technicolor.

While the previous “anatomy” sequence appears to have been intended to encourage the viewer to make analytical connections between the shots, and thus the various instruments, to arrive at an orchestral whole, this latter sequence seems more modestly oriented toward producing a lively surface impression of Carnival activity to get the viewer “in the mood” for the scenes that follow. There is an evocative parallel between this animated sequence and the one of household objects “dancing” to the hot jazz in “The Story of Jazz,” described later. The use of animation to immerse the spectator in the entertainment side of Carnival also uncannily foreshadows the introduction of the animated character “Zé Carioca” (Joe Carioca), who dances to Ary Barroso’s “Aquarela do Brasil” (“Brazilian Watercolor”) in Walt Disney’s medium-length travelogue, *Saludos Amigos* (1943), notwithstanding the marked differences between Welles’s and Disney’s treatments of Brazil mentioned in chapter 5.

Rio Nightlife

More within the parameters of existing cinematic practice, North and South, we are given entrée to the actual Carnival celebration by way of a sociological breakdown of club venues, where we find local inhabitants dancing and frolicking. These range from the prestigious Teatro Municipal, open only to the political and economic elite and hosted by Brazil’s first lady, Dona Darcy Vargas (a sequence that combines documentary footage with dramatized reenactment); the lower-middle-class Teatro da Independência, a showcase for heterosexual male transvestitism; the Teatro da República, attended by Afro-Brazilians (this has survived in black-and-white documentary footage); and the fictional rendering of an exclusive “Tennis Clube,” in which Welles stages a romantic interlude that unfolds in rhythmic accompaniment to the well-known *choro* (slow-paced ragtime song) “Carinhoso” (“Affectionately”), composed by Pixinguinha and performed by popular recording stars Moraes Netto and Odete Amaral (see fig. 21). This scene would have perhaps most resembled the romantic and atmospheric interludes set on the verandas of countless “Latin American” nightclubs in the contemporary Twentieth Century-Fox musicals shot in Hollywood and showcasing Carmen Miranda. Here, Welles begins to blur the boundary between proscenium and audience to underscore the participatory nature of the celebration: there is no space within which to passively view the spectacle. The serenade begins as the musicians leave the bandstand to take a break from the frenetic Car-



Figure 21. Carnival celebration at the Teatro Municipal, Rio de Janeiro, February 1942. Photograph by Genevieve Naylor. Courtesy Peter Reznikoff.

nival *marchas*. As they mingle with the romantic couples on the terrace, one of the club-going dancers (most probably Moraes Netto) seeks out Odete Amaral to sing “Carinhoso” in duet.

While shooting this number, Welles appears to have toyed with the idea of cutting between the elegant couples in the “Tennis Clube” and a threadbare version of the same scene set in a fictitious favela. A young woman (played by the nonprofessional Abigail Mauricio Horta) waits for her lover (played by an unnamed Argentine tango singer) on the veranda of a hill-side shack. As soon as her lover has answered her singing, finishing the stanza, their song is interrupted by the sudden start of samba drumming and dancing in the patio below, much in the same way that the musicians are caught

midstream in “Carinhoso” by the rambunctious resumption of Carnival samba on the bandstand in the Tennis Clube.

Street Processions

Each year, the club dances precede the actual street parade, and as a transition in the treatment occurs (probably a dissolve) from night to day, Welles shifts our focus from the celebration indoors to the outdoor festivities, full throttle. Concomitantly, there is a shift from distinguishing among discrete socially and ethnically marked spaces to focusing on the mingling and interaction of people of all social backgrounds in the urban public sphere (a source of particular disgruntlement for RKO Studio, as we shall see in chapter 6) and from the portrayal of individual characters and performers to what Welles aptly describes as a “rising river of humanity.”⁹¹ The sequence begins with a reenactment of the formation of a “rivulet” that rapidly becomes a stream feeding into this river, shot in the peripheral neighborhood of Quintinho, where Grande Othelo leads celebrants into groupings of increasing size—first small bands, or *blocos*, then *ranchos* (a false cognate of the Mexican word), then *cordões*, or human cordons—down the streets into the center of Rio. (A fragment of the “rivulet” phase of the sequence has been restored and appears in the kaleidoscopic montage sequence at the end of the 1993 reconstruction.) As in *Orfeu Negro*, we see people piling into trolley cars, transformed from their customary function into rhythmic bandstands, vibrating with the sound of samba. This formal strategy of showing small groups of people within the frame transformed into a boundless mass stretching beyond the limits of the frame is repeated in “Jangadeiros” in the funeral sequence, where a distinct procession in single file is morphed into a “river of humanity” at the top of the dune near the cemetery.

In “Carnaval,” the human river leads by force of habit into the fabled “Praça Onze,” or “Square Eleven”—locally referred to as “Little Africa.” More than just a familiar place of Carnival celebration, Praça Onze was the locus for traditional, weekly jamming sessions by Afro-Brazilian percussionists and the birthplace of many sambas, and even samba schools, at the homes of Afro-Bahian matriarchs such as Tia Aciata, where early twentieth-century composers such as Pixinguinha and Sinhô had assembled to play and compose their hits.⁹² From the standpoint of its deep history, then, Praça Onze was (and still is) a key site of Afro-Brazilian memory reaching back to the period of slavery. As a contemporary site of cultural production and community formation, it underscored the extent to which samba was not merely a form of popular entertainment but an important means of communication and cultural identification (see fig. 22).

Significantly, it is here that Welles chose to insert the only extended dialogue scene in the episode, set on the rooftop of a downtown skyscraper over-



Figure 22. Carnival celebration in Praça Onze, Rio de Janeiro, February 1942. Photograph by Genevieve Naylor. Courtesy Peter Reznikoff.

looking Praça Onze. In this scene, Welles and a fictional representative of the Vargas government, generically named “Dona Maria,” discuss the historical transformation referred to in the lyrics of the number two Carnival hit “Adeus, Praça Onze”: the square is about to be razed to make way for the modern Getúlio Vargas Avenue. This provides the pretext for Dona Maria to boast about the government initiatives to modernize the city and for Welles to launch into a discussion about the Portuguese word *saudade* (longing); only partially translatable into English, it links the two hit songs, “Adeus, Praça Onze” (expressing collective *saudade* for the square about to be destroyed) and “Saudades da Amélia” (a young man’s longing for a perfect woman named Amelia). This rooftop scene is intercut through a series of dissolves

with the crowds celebrating below, and the strains of the two songs play beneath the conversation on the sound track.

Battle of the Bands

It is twilight in Praça Onze, and after an interval of rest, where the celebrants in full costume relax in the street, the rhythm picks up again with a *batucada*, or round of percussion playing in unison. The *batucada* announces a series of what could be called “montage concerts,” beginning with “Adeus, Praça Onze.” The focus shifts from the square to various dance venues, in which “musicians of all sizes, playing instruments of all sorts, are devoting themselves in locations of all kinds, to the playing of ‘Praça Onze’ as it seems to them it must be played.”⁹³ By calling attention to the dedication and fervor with which “Praça Onze” is performed, Welles detrivializes Carnival as a leisure-filled event and points to the way in which it opens up avenues of expression for Rio’s residents to address concrete circumstances affecting their future. He stresses the emic significance of musical performance as a social act, notwithstanding its attractiveness as public spectacle. Moreover, Welles builds on the description and didactic analysis he has provided of the Carnival and its music in previous scenes to arrive at synthetic articulations of locations and performances, further expanding the semantic parameters of the episode, especially for the carioca audience.

As the focus shifts once again to the streets, the sounds of “Adeus, Praça Onze” fade, and the melody of “Saudades da Amélia” is gradually reintroduced. Four-year-old Pery Martins, the son of Herivelto Martins and Dalva de Oliveira, enters the scene, singing phrases from this song interspersed with cries for his mother, from whom he has strayed. He is literally bumped into by Grande Othelo, en route to Praça Onze, and their collision will lead synecdochally to a larger collision between those who favor “Saudades da Amélia” and the supporters of “Praça Onze.” For the moment, Welles exploits “Saudades da Amélia” in another montage sequence, in which the song is to be performed in five different styles at five different urban locations, including a featured performance by Mexican bolero star Chucho Martínez Gil, a casting decision that “speaks eloquently for practical Pan-Americanism and for the singer’s persuasiveness.”⁹⁴ Martínez’s performance segues to a reprise of Pery’s singing of the same song, a prelude to a physical battle that will take place between the two song-championing crowds headed by Pery and Grande Othelo, respectively. Portions of this conflict, which illustrates the yearly convergence of samba schools singing different tunes in Praça Onze (and another element of cultural life soon to be displaced, if not destroyed, by the construction of the new avenue) have survived in Technicolor and appear in the 1993 documentary reconstruction.

The contest is followed by yet a third “montage concert” that shows Grande



Figure 23. Orson Welles presides over a recording rehearsal for “Carnaval” with the Ray Ventura band at Cinédia Studio in Rio de Janeiro, 1942. Courtesy Richard Wilson—Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.

Othelo singing “Batuque no Morro” (“Drumming on the Hill”) while delivering a cross-dressed parody of Carmen Miranda, crosscut with “white” samba star (and close associate of Getúlio Vargas) Linda Batista singing the same song at the swanky Cassino da Urca.

Pan-American Grand Finale

These “montage concerts” would lay the groundwork for the documentary coverage of the Carnival parade in the main streets and for the spectacular climax of the episode in a musical revue staged at the Cassino da Urca. The themes of Carnival music are recapped in the presence of 1942’s Rei Momo, or King of Misrule, then segue into a pan-American big-band number in which dancers and singers representing the twenty-two American republics appear on stage to convey the notion that “the Americas, all the Americas together, are joined in fact as well as in idea, today rather than in the future.”⁹⁵ Both musical numbers were arranged by Paul Misraki and performed by Ray Ventura and his orchestra, and fortified by Latin American musicians and performers (see fig. 23).⁹⁶

Coda

At this point, we have traveled a rich, rhythmically syncopated, and varied trajectory, from the center of pre-Carnival samba practice on the hill to Rio's top touristic venue, the Cassino da Urca, where Carmen Miranda was "discovered" by Broadway impresario Lee Shubert during the Carnival of 1939.⁹⁷ Yet Welles chooses not to end the episode with this scene, which would have befitted any contemporary Hollywood musical and was especially designed to promote the Good Neighbor Policy. The casino showcase, doubling as the figurative "crossroads" of the Americas, is only a provisional telos for this episode and the film as a whole. Instead, Welles chooses to return, as if himself stricken with *saudade*, once more to the streets of downtown Rio, where at dawn on Ash Wednesday we encounter Pery asleep on the steps of the Teatro Municipal and, in thematic counterpoint, Othelo slumbering in Praça Onze, as the melody of the eponymous song wafts vaguely through the air "in a minor key."⁹⁸ A policeman arrives to rouse and interrogate Pery, who sleepily hums "Saudades da Amélia" as he is carried off to his home, while Grande Othelo, who upon discovering that his tamborim is broken when he is rudely awoken by a shopkeeper's broom, makes his own way home through the streets, toward the favela. Thus, the narrative comes spatially and diegetically full circle: the camera pans up to a streetlamp and the dangling "Praça Onze" sign, whereupon day breaks and the scene fades out to Welles's closing narration over the *jangadeiros*' restaged departure from Rio to Fortaleza.

The early symphony films had already explored the contrast between rich and poor, old and young, night and day, in their syntactical structure, mostly through the intercutting of shots taken at different locations. In "Carnaval," however, Welles, like Soviet documentarist Dziga Vertov in *Man with a Movie Camera* (1927), his film symphony of Leningrad revealed in summer, pushes beyond these readily observable binary contrasts to explore deeper tensions at work in the passage of the city, figured as a collective consciousness, from one historical era into the next. Class and racial identity, joy and sadness, hope and *saudade* are added to the audiovisual mix as cultural expression, specifically the samba, provides the lens through which to gauge the effects of modernization on human relations and social identity. Commenting on the "Batuque no Morro" montage, Welles notes: "The contrast is one not only of voices, but of directions: the Carnival of tradition is a celebration of the streets alone. But recent years have seen a trend indoors to the Baile and the Casino. The contrast, as it's illustrated by this song, isn't extreme—but the raucous raggle-taggle jamboree of the streets and the more professional, if equally enthusiastic atmosphere of the night club, is interesting in juxtaposition."⁹⁹

While this passage helps to underscore that Welles *did* have a method for what some at RKO perceived at the time to be "madness" (or, what is worse,

hedonistic self-indulgence), it also points to the limits of taking this treatment to be an isomorphic reflection of the authorial text, given that it was written expressly to “sell” the entertainment value of the project to RKO, and is equally careful to show the respect of Welles and team for Brazilian officialdom. The “contrast” Welles describes is more than just interesting, and the two moments and venues of Carnival are more than merely juxtaposed in travelogue fashion.

To read “with Orson Welles” (and, by implication, with Grande Othelo, Herivelto Martins, and Robert Meltzer), one need only follow the threads of two or three structuring devices, which work alongside the music itself to position the spectator in relationship to the Carnival and the world it reveals. Again, the structure of the episode has yet to gel in phenomenal terms, but Welles is indeed adumbrating an editing scheme in this treatment, and as with any other film, the montage, as Soviet film theorist Lev Kuleshov suggested, “is inextricably linked to the artist’s worldview and his ideological purpose.”¹⁰⁰ (It should be remembered that, in contrast to his student Sergei Eisenstein, Kuleshov defined montage more broadly as “the organization of cinematic material” to which “different stylistic approaches and ideological effects can be attached.”)¹⁰¹

Even a cursory reading of the treatment reveals that while due respects are paid by Welles to the innocuous (and therefore politically “safe”) number one samba hit, “Saudades da Amélia,” the centerpiece for the dramatic reenactment of the February 1942 Carnival is the popular hit “Adeus, Praça Onze” (“Farewell, Square Eleven”). The latter, which would have been repeated at several intervals throughout the montage sequences of street and club scenes, explicitly refers to the planned destruction of the downtown square, where samba schools had traditionally met and fought out their differences prior to the parade. The rooftop dialogue scene bears two ideological messages regarding this event, depending on which register of discourse one chooses to pay attention to: the shots of the celebrants in Praça Onze pull us away from the modernizing discourse of officialdom uttered from the “rooftop” (history as authoritative narrative) and into the multi-vocal maelstrom of history as social process.

Beyond the confines of the soundstage, and underlying the contrast in modes of celebration that Welles describes in the treatment, an inexorable process of urban modernization was coinciding with a proportionate growth in the black population of Rio de Janeiro.¹⁰² Thus, the prominence of the song “Adeus, Praça Onze” both actualizes the episode (the square’s destruction was imminent) and resignifies the representation of Rio’s urban space and of “Carnaval” as tropical spectacle, to get the viewer to focus on the deep social ramifications of access to cultural territories in the city. Black Rio is being celebrated even as the traditional locale of Afro-Brazilian expression and dialogue is being destroyed. At either end of the episode, one

also finds the invocation and rewriting of the recent historical past with the *jangadeiros*' entry into Rio at the beginning of Carnival and their departure by airplane marking its close.¹⁰³ The combination in "Carnaval" of these two historical components and strands of diegesis, the end of Praça Onze and the return of the *jangadeiros*, lends a bittersweet edge to the joyous celebration: as many samba song lyrics express, it does indeed involve a release of sadness, and even social protest, as people find the strength to carry on with life's struggles.

In 1942, when Carnival was gaining legitimacy and at the same time became instrumentalized by the Brazilian state, public displays of melancholy or longing (which imply both desire and loss, emotions to be regulated and contained during the Estado Novo) did not conform to official Carnival discourse, as revealed in lyrics of other songs. Thus, Welles anticipates in the wistful coda, with Pery's and Othelo's return home, the very modern and metaphoric emphasis on melancholy and its milder local variant, *saudade*, as a historico-cultural *condition* that would occur years later during the urban phase of the Cinema Novo, after the 1964 coup d'état, expressed in the frequently ironic, contrapuntal relationship of bossa nova to the image track. Good examples of this counterpoint can be found in Glauber Rocha's *Terra em Transe* (*Land in Anguish*, 1967) and Rogério Sganzerla's experimental film *Copacabana Mon Amour* (1970).

By incorporating this unexpected emotional contrast in "Carnaval" (without the irony of the allegorical Cinema Novo films), Welles brings the episode closer in sensibility to the mixture of emotions displayed in "My Friend Bonito" and "Jangadeiros." Reflecting upon the artistic figure of the bullfighter years after the making of *It's All True*, Welles commented on how the matador was capable of incorporating simultaneously the "tragic actor" and the carnivalesque: a sense of decorum and flashiness in celebration of a struggle in which one of the participants must die bleeding.¹⁰⁴ If the *jangadeiro* can be compared to the matador in terms of the existential challenges he must face daily, then in spiritual and performative terms, Grande Othelo, in his role as the malandro muse of "Carnaval," also represents a hybrid amalgam of tragedy, grace, and exuberance. Through Grande Othelo, Welles explores the nostalgia, the sadness, and the struggle underlying the ephemera of each "Carnaval" celebration. Belonging everywhere and nowhere within the "Carnaval" diegesis, Othelo doubles as errant muse, linking the urban sequences together, and as a parasocial element who in the end has no home or job to go to but is left to roam the streets. He is a contrastive, disruptive presence against which the collectivities portrayed in the various sequences are able to cohere; yet he is also an unwitting companion for the lost boy Pery at Carnival's close, echoing the contrastive pairing of Miguel and Chico in "My Friend Bonito."

Finally, music is more than simply a subject for the "Carnaval" episode; it

was to serve as its structural backbone. As such, it is abundantly clear from Welles's treatment and other related documents that it was designed to take the spectator beyond the realm of "juxtaposition" and "contrast," even beyond the realm of ideological positions implied in the song lyrics and orchestration, to provide a dynamic formal and discursive means of achieving social and cultural syncretism, if not synthesis. In each of the narrative clusters described previously, the rhythm of the music helps to determine the entrances of characters, the timing of shifts in choreography within shots and scenes, and editing cuts to be made within and between sequences. Throughout the episode, the samba music is largely diegetic, although during postproduction, it is quite possible that Welles would have made use of recorded music extradiegetically as transitional material between scenes and sequences. Yet unlike diegetic music in most narrative films (including many musicals), it is used not merely to create an atmosphere for the scripted dramatic events, but determines the tone of each scene, overpowering the characters' emotions. In "Carnaval," action is inserted into musical sequences (rather than vice versa, as in integrated Hollywood musicals), while song lyrics and percussive modulations clearly take precedence over the dialogue in each scene, making, oxymoronically, for a musical film that uses "silent" rather than "sound" strategies of narration.

In "Carnaval," the songs and their corresponding sites of enunciation were to be physically integrated with each other (and not simply juxtaposed) by way of the crosscutting of musical performances in medias res, creating a "call-and-response" effect. This is the case with the multiple performances of "Se Alguem Disse" in the "Samba Practice" sequence referred to earlier, as well as the performance of "Carinhoso," using both the genuine voices of Moraes Netto and Odete Amaral, who appear in the *Tennis Clube*, and, in playback, lesser-known actors posing as favela dwellers.¹⁰⁵ More dramatically, Grande Othelo has stressed how his own singing of "Batuque no Morro" ("Drumming on the Hill") was to have been intercut, almost line for line, with Linda Batista's delivery of the same song in the posh *Cassino da Urca*, and how, for the time, this was a radically new approach to the treatment of musical numbers in film.¹⁰⁶ I have been able to locate only one example prior to "Carnaval" of the use of crosscutting and a call-and-response format to create a sense of social contrast as well as simultaneity of action in a single musical performance: Rouben Mamoulian's whimsical musical *Love Me Tonight* (1932).

One of the salient points that Welles wished to make about "Carnaval" was that it was ubiquitous and inescapable, so that anyone who wished to observe it could not do so without actually participating. It therefore provided the perfect screen setting for North American viewers to get "in touch" with Latin American culture. In addition to fusing different strands of action, musical and dramatic, and cutting between performance venues, Welles consistently

blurred the boundary between the proscenium of musical performance and the space ordinarily reserved for nonperforming spectators. This blurring of conventional boundaries can be traced back to Welles's work in the theater in the thirties, as well as his recommendation that Duke Ellington bring his orchestra out of the pit to join the action onstage in the "revusical" "Jump for Joy." Recalling Welles's stagings for the controversial play *The Cradle Will Rock* (1937), Hallie Flanagan, director of the Federal Theatre Project, marveled: "This was not just a play set to music, nor music illustrated by actors, but music and play equally something new and better than either."¹⁰⁷

In the scripted choreography for the crowning "Panamérica" number at the Cassino da Urca, Welles also breaks the convention of racial segregation practiced there not only by showing the "whiter" patrons moving to the music but also by having the waiters break out of their servile roles to samba dance to the music being performed onstage. In interviews years later, both Herivelto Martins and Grande Othelo recalled that, during ordinary performances, Othelo was allowed to present himself on the Cassino stage as a star but could not "mingle with the clientele" at the tables, which prompted Welles to hold his "research meetings" with Othelo and Martins at a location they playfully referred to as "Bar X" near the Cassino.¹⁰⁸

Although it is difficult to determine with precision from treatments, stills, and a few footage fragments, the strength of the visual aesthetic in "Carnaval" appears to reside in the surface value rather than the depth of the image in the frame (owing partly, of course, to the limited depth of field allowed by Technicolor stock at that time). This "tapestry" quality, which contrasts greatly with the visual aesthetics of "Jangadeiros," holds as much for the staged and reenacted as for the documentary scenes. In a manner congruent with the collective spirit of Carnival itself, Welles seems to have maximized the surface value in human presence, rather than abstract and figurative form (as in Disney's animation films), tending to populate the frame with props and people, in some scenes numbering up to three hundred extras.¹⁰⁹ A good example of this strategy can be found in the Praça Onze fight sequence (featured in the 1993 documentary), where we are barely able to detect Grande Othelo from among the twirls of serpentine, brightly costumed celebrants and street vendors, until the camera moves in close to show him enmeshed in a capoeira brawl. What began partly as the result of circumstance—the prominence of large crowds, a celebration that unfolded quickly and, to the newcomers, unpredictably, like a storm—came to make thematic sense, as Welles noted: "We always had to remember that this Carnival part of the picture was less about individuals, or musical numbers, or dances, than about Carnival itself. Therefore talents, in every instance, had to be integrated into the bigger theme."¹¹⁰

The effect is far from flat or undecipherable: what spatial depth might seem to be lacking synchronically on the visual track is compensated for, first,

ALTO *PANAMERICA & FOLGA NÊGO*

2º de Samba

URUGUAY

PARAGUAY

CLAR

CONGA

CHILE

RUMBA

TANGO

MEXICO VIVO

Solo

SAXO ALTO

Figure 24. A page from the score for “Panamérica e Folga Nêgo,” composed by Nicolás Otero, arranged by Vicente Paiva and Paul Mistraki for “Carnaval.” Courtesy Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

by the density of the polyrhythms and instrumentation of samba on the sound track and, second, by the syntactical articulation of shots between and within scenes and the multiple impact of these articulations on the spectator. For example, the human collectivities and the colorful plenitude of the *mise-en-scène* of which they are a part are not the result of “effortless” and gratuitous excess in the manner of a Busby Berkeley musical. They were built—from the hilltop to the city, and from the *banda* to the *cordão*, through shifts in framing and shot lengths, from low- to high-angled and close-up to medium long—so as to increase the spectators’ comprehension of each com-

ponent part, as well as draw them into the action as virtual participants, rubbing elbows with the national celebrants. In a preliminary treatment for the studio staging of the festivities at the posh Teatro Municipal, one finds a clear sequencing of close shots of individuals ("man eating turkey"); medium-close shots of couples in disarray ("girls return to table from dancing, messes [*sic*] up hair of escort"); medium shots of groups ("groups at tables, arms interlocked, singing songs"); and full shots of the crowd ("long shot all tables, banana leaves at all tables, waving time to music").¹¹¹

In place of juxtaposition, then, there is dialogism, not only in the urban and national spheres but also with regard to the arena of inter-American relations, as is prominently displayed in the "Panamérica e Folga Nêgo" number staged at the Cassino da Urca. Here we find the attempt to make samba "cross over" into a big-band format—and, conversely, to demonstrate, through the performance of the European big band of Ray Ventura, the capacity for foreign "white" musicians to adapt successfully to the "Latin beat," a mission that Welles would pursue further in his *Hello Americans* radio series.¹¹² Thus, the tropical casino, which at that time was promoting the hemispheric circulation of popular music, is transformed from a familiar site for entertainment with which most urban audiences in the hemisphere could identify (whether in Mexico City, Los Angeles, New York, Havana, or Rio de Janeiro) into a strategic site for initiating and fueling the inter-American encounter (see fig. 24).

"THE STORY OF JAZZ"

This book isn't supposed to be so much about me as about swing; where it came from, how it grew, and what it is. It is just an accident that swing and I were born and brought up side by side in New Orleans, traveled up the Mississippi together, and, in 1922, the year I am writing about now, were there in Chicago getting acquainted with the North—and the North getting acquainted with us.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG, in *Swing That Music*

Just as "Carnaval" was to provide the neophyte spectator with a "genealogy" of samba, so "The Story of Jazz," based on Louis Armstrong's autobiography, would have provided a "genealogy" of jazz music in the early twentieth century, educating the North American as well as the Latin American spectator as to the history and socially differentiated performance venues associated with music many were already dancing to in the early forties in its more commercialized and formulaic variants. "The Story of Jazz" was to have gone into production in December 1941, precisely around the time that Welles was invited by Rockefeller and Whitney to tour South America. Were "The Story of Jazz" to have been incorporated as the fourth episode of the "macro" text of *It's All True*, the resulting combination of two episodes focusing on African-based music and its social and cultural importance in differ-

ent national spheres would have firmly anchored the film in Afro-diasporic discourse, encouraging a dynamic of communication, identification, and exchange among the African-rooted populations of the hemisphere.

In both episodes, Welles and his collaborators went to great lengths to provide a sociohistorical context for the birth samba and jazz (respectively), as well as to differentiate among their socially and culturally inflected manifestations in modern society. The innovativeness of this approach can perhaps best be appreciated when one considers that only recently (in the last decade or so) has an active exchange been sustained between Afro-Brazilian and African American musicians, artists, intellectuals, spiritual leaders, and cultural enthusiasts. This exchange is emblemized in the late twentieth-century visits of Michael Jackson and Spike Lee to favelas in Rio de Janeiro, but it has also increasingly taken place in other, less publicized, venues, including direct communication between urban Afro-Brazilian youth and African American and Latina/o youth in the United States, revolving around popular music and poetic forms, such as rap, funk, and hip-hop.

As a studio-produced, musical film in the early forties, "The Story of Jazz" was designed to evoke, rather than document, the locations of Armstrong's trek northward, from New Orleans to Chicago to New York and Europe, through the customary dressing of sets on a Hollywood soundstage. Nevertheless, Welles appears to have taken his cue from the innovations occurring within the jazz medium to introduce new, nonnaturalistic strategies that create breaks within the diegesis. In one scene, for example, Kid Ory is shown at an outdoor location near a vegetable stand in California, directly addressing the camera in testimonial form. Alternately, there were plans to explore the use of animation, in collaboration with Oskar Fischinger, to convey the power of jazz to the public by illustrating the effects of its rhythms on the *mise-en-scène* as a whole, including inanimate objects, as sketched in a memo by screenwriter Elliot Paul: "Just the right balance between abstract and literal forms would give a scene such as you [Welles] suggested, with food and utensils jumping in rhythm to music, *a significant character*. As a dissolve approached the abstract would become more important, and form a connecting pattern with the next scene."¹³

Although "The Story of Jazz" would have been essentially a biopic that focused on the contributions of Louis Armstrong to the world of jazz (and thus comes closest to an alternative "axiological" history of music), and "Carnaval," despite the itinerant and strong mediating presence of Grande Othelo, gives emphasis to samba as it is *collectively* produced and consumed in Rio de Janeiro (and thus is oriented more in the direction of a *cine-ethnography*), there are many parallels in the treatment given to Afro-based popular music in relation to national wartime identity, with wider implications for a new cultural politics linking the Americas.

First and foremost, in both episodes, there is a central concern with the

process whereby a vernacular form of cultural expression, such as *batuque no morro* blues or New Orleans-based early jazz, becomes transformed into a widely accessible, transsocial, and popular form of expression in urban nightclub showcases, and is then recorded and transmitted by way of modern communications media to form a vital part of national mass culture. In both episodes, this trajectory is spatialized. In "Carnaval," as I have just discussed, we obtain access to the spaces of samba by way of crosscutting, and each space is differentially "positioned" with respect to both social identity and the seemingly inexorable process of modernization. In "The Story of Jazz," the process is embodied in the dialogical persona of Louis Armstrong, so that the U.S. equivalents for these different "spaces" are emplotted through a series of ellipses to capture Armstrong's life and career itinerary from his birthplace, New Orleans, to Chicago, New York, London, and Paris. (He was born at the turn of the century and reached his peak of production and notoriety in the popularization phase of the twenties and thirties, stretching into the "mass" swing phase of the World War II period.) With each shift in location in "The Story of Jazz," Armstrong's notoriety and the breadth and size of his audience increase, indicating the degree to which in the earlier portion of the century, Chicago was crucial as a threshold marking the point of transition for many southern and local jazz artists: from relative public obscurity to a degree of notoriety, according to which they could perform for "white" audiences, obtain their first recording contracts and, if lucky, national and international bookings. An early script for "The Story of Jazz" conveys the decisive role of Chicago by reiterating the contrast in the professional destinies of Armstrong, who quickly became an international hit after forming his own band, and his longtime mentor from New Orleans, King Oliver, who remained tied to the local Chicago scene. For example, there is an especially poignant scene in which the aging Oliver sits in the wings of New York City's Savoy Ballroom to listen to Armstrong and band play "Potato Head Blues." Thus, screenwriter Elliot Paul links the evolution of jazz to generational differences among the musicians.¹¹⁴

Concomitantly, there is a concern in both episodes with recognition for the original *black authorship* of forms that have become commercialized for mass distribution. For example, just as Welles is careful to locate the composition of "Se Alguem Disse" in the favela in "Carnaval," it is significant that in the early forties, when African American musicians were expressing frustration at the "white" appropriation and mass replication of swing music beyond the moment of its creative effervescence in the thirties,¹¹⁵ Welles wished to restore the significant role played by Afro-diasporic culture and by creative personalities in its development into a modern form in "The Story of Jazz." As in "Carnaval," one also finds in "The Story of Jazz" the didactic exposition of this process, not through an "anatomy of jazz" but through the spatialized representation of jazz history, along with an introduction by a "nar-

rator" (presumably Orson Welles) of Armstrong's origins and the intercalation of dramatic scenes with testimonials shot on location with jazz pioneers, such as Kid Ory. Interestingly, the interviews would have been conducted in a call-and-response format in which the offscreen narrator suddenly intrudes into the diegesis to converse with these musicians, who are interviewed in habitual documentary, rather than showcase, settings.

The differentiation of jazz not only as to geographic and musical source but as to mode of dissemination is also reinforced by the planned use of Duke Ellington's arrangements and original score as a "framing track" for the dialogue scenes and segues into performances by Armstrong and his associates. Ellington, who shared with Armstrong a strong blues influence in his music, epitomizes a contemporary effort (of which he was a leading force) to show recognition for the vernacular as a vital part of urban jazz, and to legitimate jazz as a classical musical form.¹¹⁶ This is illustrated in the RKO short *Black and Tan*, directed by Dudley Murphy in 1929: a "hot" performance of Ellington's significantly titled "Symphony in Black and Tan" at New York's Cotton Club is followed by a spiritual sung by a chorus at the deathbed of Freddie Washington's character, which ends on a jazz note as Billy Strayhorn's trumpet picks up the melody from the chorus. The pairing of Ellington and Armstrong would also introduce different "speech genres" onto the jazz musical track, insofar as Armstrong, while harking back to New Orleans tradition, "modernized" Oliver's music by becoming a virtuoso soloist who excelled at improvisation, whereas Ellington was known for his lyricism, as well as his skills at composing for, and directing, ensemble playing.

What distinguishes "The Story of Jazz" from the other episodes, including "Carnaval," is its boldness in representing "ethnicities in relation" (to quote Shohat and Stam).¹¹⁷ This is achieved not only by bringing ethnic "whites" into the same diegetic space as African Americans through jazz music (as was actually customary in certain urban venues) but also by showing the different positions that such "whites" could take with respect to a popular African American musical form. "The Story of Jazz" is just as bold in foregrounding the contributions of black women to the development of jazz music: The character of jazz composer and pianist Lil' Hardin is shown bringing her background in classical piano to the jazz sets of King Oliver; together with Bessie Smith, she urges Armstrong to quit Oliver's band to form his own with her.

As with "Love Story," one finds the usage of vernacular speech in the characters' dialogue throughout the script. This underscores not only the film's exploration of a specifically African American sociogeography, with its internal variations according to region and class, but also the episode's devotion to the dissemination of *jazz culture*. At the same time, it is the only North American episode to truly incorporate a sense of heteroglossia, as European accents and languages can be heard in the different performance spaces. A

language unto itself, like samba, jazz is shown as having the power to penetrate into and across these spaces, which, left to their own devices, would have little means or reason for being compared, let alone enter into dialogue with one another. Finally, were it to have been included in the finished work, "The Story of Jazz" also would have been the only North American episode with immediate relevance for the war effort. Officially banned in Nazi-occupied Europe, Armstrong came to symbolize the freedoms associated with Allied culture, and his recordings were clandestinely distributed and imitated in live performances by attaching "coded" titles to the songs.¹¹⁸ In this sense, Armstrong would have been transformed by the film into an unofficial yet popularly welcomed "Good Will ambassador" to occupied Europe, a reminder of a time when cultural expression flowed freely across the Atlantic, with jazz functioning as a liberating force.

"THE ANDES," OR "ATAWALLPA INKA"

Although Welles makes mention of plans to include a Peruvian episode in *It's All True* shortly after his arrival in Brazil, this remains the most tenuous and obscure of the seven episodes, since its elaboration appears to have followed Welles's expulsion from RKO (one finds scripted versions of it only after Welles returned to the United States in August 1942). No doubt, this delay can partly be attributed to Welles's strong desire to cull the narrative concept from direct contact with the geocultural location, and he did not travel to the Andes until the Brazilian episodes had been shot. Nevertheless, "Atawallpa Inka" would have brought to the Latin American version of *It's All True* important aspects of hemispheric history—cultural domination, political tyranny, and genocide resulting from European conquest—that one finds displaced in the three shot episodes by more directly contemporary concerns (focusing, for example, on *mestizaje*, cultural hybridity, and participatory democracy as "modern solutions" to timeworn conflicts and socioeconomic exploitation). The episode would have addressed these aspects less obliquely than was the case in "The Captain's Chair" and would also have supported an indigenist take on Latin American history in a manner more blunt and less conciliatory than "My Friend Bonito."

The Iberian conquest of the New World was undoubtedly the bloodiest chapter of hemispheric history. It unleashed permanent and radical transformations in the way of life, sense of self, and political and economic organization of the peoples residing both in the Iberian Peninsula and in the Americas—those who survived what amounted to a genocidal holocaust. Welles's choice of this subject for a film intended to encourage hemispheric solidarity during World War II is intriguing, to say the least. This choice, and the explicit references to physical violence and cultural shifts linked to the conquest in the unshot "Andes" episode, can be attributed, I would ar-

gue, to the transition of *It's All True* to a Good Neighbor project and World War II as its primary discursive context of production and reception, as opposed to a project developing sheerly out of Welles's creative interests as a director under contract to RKO studio. Its cancellation thus remains as much as a casualty for the OCIAA Motion Picture Division as it does for Mercury Productions.

The analysis of this episode faces similar challenges to those of "The Captain's Chair," in that no fully developed screenplay or shooting script can be located. Instead, it survives, somewhat obscurely, as a segue between "Bonito" and "Jangadeiros" in one of the late "wraparound" scripts Welles submitted to RKO for approval,¹¹⁹ and in an installment of the *Hello Americans* radio series titled "The Andes," broadcast on CBS on 22 November 1942. Although it was designed and articulated for a different medium (and, for Welles, radio seems to have lent itself more easily than cinema to the direct expression of political views, and hence the delivery of OCIAA propaganda), the radio show, broadcast just a few short months after Welles's return, is perhaps the best existing source from which to derive an assessment of how he might have handled the episode had he shot and completed it in 1942.

At the core of Welles's narration of the Spanish conquest in this radio program is the fateful encounter between the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro and his army, and Atawallpa Inka (also known as Thupa-Atawallpa), the last Inka chief to rule greater Peru prior to official Spanish colonial rule. Like other encounters and battles in the conquest of this region, the tale of Atawallpa Inka is one of political betrayal, devastating infighting, and the problem of succession to the Peruvian "throne," whether occupied by an Inka or a Spaniard. Of special interest within the historical context of *It's All True* is the notion, suggested and subtended by the events of this encounter, of the Spanish empire having been founded on treachery, murder, and expropriation rather than the pursuit of a civilizing mission through religious conversion and colonization. There is also the question of the authenticity of Spanish political rule and cultural production in the New World.

According to surviving chronicles, prior to his execution by Pizarro's men at Cajamarca, Atawallpa Inka was twice tricked by the Spaniards into forfeiting the mineral riches and sovereignty of the Inkan empire. First he was ambushed by hidden Spanish forces in his own city after returning from an encampment on 16 November 1532, whereupon the casualties of the Amerindians who fought in his defense amounted to more than two thousand. Then he was falsely accused of treason (of organizing a nonexistent armed rebellion) after making a vain attempt to purchase his freedom by filling a room with gold objects gathered from his occupied empire as far as Cuzco, which were forcibly smelted beyond recognition by native goldsmiths into gold and silver bars for Spanish distribution. (Thus, the radio broadcast took place close to the 410th anniversary of Atawallpa Inka's capture.) In a

final act of capitulation, Atawallpa Inka accepted Catholic baptism to avoid being burned alive.¹²⁰ While Atawallpa's capture and liquidation did not definitively secure this major portion of the Inkan empire for Pizarro, this was the first pivotal step in placing Peru under Spanish rule, if only for the threatening "message" it sent to remaining Inka warriors and pretenders to the throne.

In Welles's rendering of these events, Atawallpa Inka is depicted as a peace-loving ruler of a sovereign nation who does not suspect the Spaniards' material and political motives for entering Cajamarca but mistakes them for "white children" of the Inkan empire who have finally returned "from their wanderings."¹²¹ Although the events surrounding the confrontation are narrated from the perspective of both Pizarro and Atawallpa (they are each given speaking parts, played by Hans Conreid and Pedro de Córdova, respectively), the wording of Welles's extradiegetic narration leaves little to the readers' imagination as to who the villains were.¹²² The men in Pizarro's army are alternately characterized as "mortal as sin" and "butchers on horseback," whereas the Inkas are "children of the sun,"¹²³ expert craftsmen, and "road-builders."

In the program, the vast destruction and unmitigated brutality wrought by Pizarro's army against the Inkan empire (brutality, Welles is careful to point out, from which the Spaniards did not spare themselves, since Pizarro was eventually "murdered by his own men") set the stage, by way of a temporal ellipsis of nearly three centuries, for a growing series of military campaigns alternately organized by indigenous and criollo strategists (such as Thupa Amaru and Simón Bolívar, respectively) in opposition to Spanish rule. This, in turn, provides the narrative pretext for a series of historical and ideological parallelisms between U.S. revolutionaries of 1776 and the "liberators" of the South American continent. (For example, Welles refers to Bolívar's perilous march across the Andes to victory as "another Valley Forge.")

At the same time, it is well known that the Inkas themselves were "colonizers," albeit in a more carefully planned and less destructive manner than the Spaniards, having conquered vast expanses of Andean territory to the north of Cuzco, just two reigns prior to that of Atawallpa Inka. And, by at least 1902, it was already public knowledge in the English-speaking world that Atawallpa himself had reportedly seized the throne to this empire by force.¹²⁴ According to a widely read Spanish-language chronicle of the succession penned by the mestizo Inka Garcilaso de la Vega, the *Comentarios reales*, Atawallpa was the illegitimate, Quito-born son of Wayna Qhapaq, who, refusing to share power with his half brother, Waskar Inka (Qhapaq's legitimate heir, based in Cuzco to the south), mounted an attack on Cuzco.¹²⁵ Then, while imprisoned by Pizarro, Atawallpa surrendered much of the mineral treasure of the Inkan empire in the attempt to negotiate his own freedom, only to be betrayed in turn by the Spaniards. Thus, in the mestizo ver-

sion, the legend of Atawallpa's disrupted reign not only carries with it the full Freudian weight of the "family romance" but also brings into play a chain of multiple betrayals of great political and cultural consequence.

In this way, Garcilaso de la Vega's version strikes a resonant chord with the Mexican mestizo legend of "la Malinche," the Aztec princess who, by consenting to become the concubine of the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés, betrayed her people and paved the way for Spanish dominion over much of Mexico. Within the popular mestizo imaginary, the character flaws, historic positioning, and fates of Malinche and Atawallpa alike speak to the indissoluble, symbolic links between cultural ambivalence, racial "impurity" (a direct result of indigenous complicity with, or at least submission to, the colonial regime of rape and plunder of indigenous women and cultures), and the colonial legacy in America. Indeed, in analyzing Inka de la Vega's chronicle, Marta Bermúdez-Gallegos refers to treason as "the pivot of colonial semiosis":¹²⁶ "Victim and victimizer, Atauhualpa [*sic*] represents the essence of the colonial conjuncture in a process that reclaims, for its natural existence, the polarization between winners and losers."¹²⁷

Given the thoroughness with which his Good Neighbor projects were researched, it is unlikely that Welles would not have had access to some of this information. Yet it is equally easy to see why he might have chosen not to address the complexities of indigenous, and especially imperial, Inka rule in the context of these 1942 broadcasts. First, as Bermúdez-Gallegos has stressed, there is no *definitive* version of Atawallpa's integrity as a ruler and of the details of his imprisonment at the hands of Pizarro. Instead, the written accounts that have survived (some of which are in effect transcriptions of oral accounts, both Spanish and Quechua) strongly reflect the cultural positioning of their authors, especially in their depiction of Atawallpa in contrast with his captors, the conquistadors.¹²⁸ If Bermúdez-Gallegos's interpretations of the surviving texts are correct, were Welles to have focused on Atawallpa's treachery (on any level), in effect his account would then have lent preference to the hegemonic Spanish and mestizo versions and their attendant discursive strategies,¹²⁹ at the same time defusing the logic of what is ostensibly the primary function of the Atawallpa legend within the scope of the radio program: to set the historical stage for the struggles for independence from Spain. In other words, Amerindian sovereignty over the continent (and, therefore, the integrity of the Amerindian state) comes to figure, paradoxically, within Welles's narrative as a stake in later movements for colonial independence, which begin with the resistance of the Quechua leader Thupa Amaru yet end with the establishment of U.S.-inspired constitutional democracies in much of the region. These latter are predicated in turn on the transfer of power not to indigenous leaders but to the rebellious criollos and, at the very most, to mestizos.

Second, although Welles does not therefore seem to be interested in in-

vestigating and reporting on indigenous culture and politics per se, his omission of references to Atawallpa Inka's controversial accession to power, together with his rhetoric of admiration for the Inkan empire in its totality, belies a strong interest in preserving the integrity and dignity of indigenous protagonists—especially for a North American listening public so accustomed to seeing its own indigenous population consistently maligned for its “bloodthirsty” and “unruly” character as a “race,” or alternatively sentimentalized as “noble savages.” Indeed, Welles effectively inverts the customary deployment of the hegemonic, Eurocentric civilization versus barbarism dichotomy, by combining de la Vega's figuration of an Inkan “paradise lost” with the Quechuan emphasis on Atawallpa's betrayal at the hands of bewildering and barbaric (because so lawless in their outward behavior) Spanish intruders.¹³⁰ Thus, Welles's depiction of the colonial adversaries stands as a strong corrective to popular ethnic misrepresentations, while casting the Inkans firmly on the side of “we,” and the Spanish on the reprehensible side of “they,” an alien presence that shoulders the burden for violent political change in the Americas.¹³¹ This strategy echoes the focalization in “Bonito,” which directs our sympathy toward the mestizo child, and distances us from the adults (the hacienda owner and the bullfighter) steeped in Hispanic tradition.

In the context of World War II, and in contrast to the portrayal of Americans as a peace-loving people, the injustices and brutality inflicted by the European invaders encourage allegorical associations with the contemporary European tyrants linked to the Axis powers (including a favorite Wellesian target of criticism, Spanish dictator General Francisco Franco). The power of this allegory is increased by the betrayal of Atawallpa after he has tried to “trade” with the Spaniards—much as, it was argued by pro-Allied propaganda at the time, Latin Americans stood much to lose by trading with, and surrendering access to their primary resources to, the Axis powers. The allegory is also reinforced by the lack of solidarity among the Amerindians (for example, the feuding between Atawallpa Inka and his half brother, or the later betrayal of Atawallpa by native interpreter Filipillo, who presented false evidence to the Spaniards of Atawallpa's treason), which, it can be argued, opened the way for Spanish victory, much as a lack of hemispheric solidarity during World War II risked opening breaches for fascism to take hold—a possible warning to Argentina and Chile, or to any other Latin American republics that exhibited vulnerability toward the formation of a fifth column.

It is not difficult to see how even hinting at a strong analogy between colonial betrayal (or, worse, self-betrayal of the native culture) and modern betrayal as the basis for “neocolonial semiosis” would have been risky business for a broadcast whose very purpose was to support the strengthening of inter-American relations during World War II at the *initiative* of the United

States. Instead, Welles focuses the theme of betrayal on the relationship of General Santander and Simón Bolívar, who, inspired by the revolt led by indigenous leader Thupa Amaru against the Spaniards, on one hand, and by the U.S. revolutionaries' campaign against the British, on the other, is presented as one of the first to fight for the independence of Andean nations. After learning of Santander's plot to assassinate him, Bolívar escapes, then returns, arguing, Welles says, for a peaceful rather than bloody resolution to the power dispute. Traitors become synonymous with impostors in this portion of the program, those who pose as revolutionaries only to impose tyranny from within: a veiled allegorical reference, no doubt, to the devious strategies of the fifth column planted in the Americas by Axis powers.

In its figuration of the colonial encounter, the "Andes" episode presents an alternative to the *mestizaje* subtext of "My Friend Bonito." Although its plot reaches definite closure, as Bolívar's project takes the place of Spanish rule, there is no clear outcome as to which path the postcolonial society should or will follow in cultural and political terms—or, more exactly, what the "place" of the persistently indigenous subject will be within the postindependence power apparatus, in any of its avatars. There is a similar ambiguity to be noted regarding the future of those who inhabit Hudson's Bay in the drama of modernization in "The Captain's Chair," and in the other episodes as well, when the spectator is coaxed to make the return to the contemporary plane of experience. The historical and narrative breach in the "Andes" program between the 1500s and the 1800s, between Atawallpa Inka and Simón Bolívar, makes it possible for Welles to introduce an element of closure by tying the vectors of social change at the moment of independence to parallel formations in the United States, and then creating an allegory for the present conjuncture that welds the discourses surrounding the creation of the independent nation-state to the discourse of its U.S.-directed defense against the Axis powers. However, since we are asked to identify with Atawallpa in the program, the dangers of acculturation, articulated at precisely the narrative juncture between Atawallpa and Bolívar (whom Welles "indianizes") are clear. Interpreted more broadly, and traveling along the long time span of the allegory to World War II, the historic denouement can easily be read as a warning to those too eager to accept *any* colonizer's terms, although the identity of the colonizer is left to the imagination.

Finally, in positioning himself as the "teller" of the story of treachery in the Americas—a story he continues to tell in *The Lady from Shanghai* and, to some extent, in *Touch of Evil*—Welles implicitly asks the viewers' cooperation in unveiling the Axis threat and defusing their propaganda tactics, thus building on his established persona in national (and, by then, hemispheric) public discourse as the arbiter of illusion and truth.

Since it is mainly through a comparison with other texts that films derive their historicity, not to mention their aesthetic valuation and political

profile—either within the scope of a director's work, of a movement or style, or within film history more broadly—the next stage in restoring a measure of textuality to *It's All True* will be to consider it more purposefully as a “text among texts.” The mapping of the endotext involves a dialogue between its primary components and existing film texts, which permits its reinstatement within the scope of Welles's film oeuvre (chapter 4). In turn, the inquiry into the “mark of the author” paves the way for an exotextual exercise that explores the film's broader sociocultural implications as revealed through contrasts and resemblances with more “successful” inter-American projects (chapter 5). Before speculating on how the film might have fared were it to have been completed (a deductive exercise), it is useful to consider how its identity was being (re)constructed prior to its abandonment in the 1940s and its material rediscovery in the 1980s.

Chapter 3

Postproduction

The Trajectory of the Film Object, and That of Critical Discourse

I myself am very American: my taste does not really shock the average American, but above all the taste of the American intellectual.

ORSON WELLES¹

The predominant emphasis on the disruption—and disruptiveness—of *It's All True* in the widely circulated literature on Welles has ironically obscured the gradual and complex process of the film's suspension, together with the film's material existence and Welles's efforts to salvage the project immediately upon his return from Latin America to the United States in August 1942. Ultimately, the film's prospects for survival as work and text have suffered not only from the apparent inability of Welles and his sponsors, RKO and the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA), to complete it as originally planned but also from the blind spots and vagaries of critical discourse. These two facets of the film's postproduction history form the focus of this chapter.

By late May 1942, there was little question that RKO was beginning to withdraw its support for the South American portions of the film. After publishing a disclaimer in Brazilian newspapers exempting itself from financial responsibility for any new initiatives undertaken by Welles and his associate producer, Richard Wilson, the studio began to restrict, and then cut off, the flow of film supplies, stock, and dollars to Brazil. Once shooting for the final scene of "Carnaval" (the "Cassino da Urca" spectacle) was wrapped in early June, all of the RKO equipment and most of the crew were shipped home. Added to the cuts and changes already made to *The Magnificent Ambersons* without Welles's consent, this vote of no confidence culminated in July with RKO's formal termination of Orson Welles's studio contract, a unilateral move punctuated by the summary expulsion of Mercury Productions from its Culver City lot. Meanwhile, the studio continued to announce publicly that it would stand by the completion of *It's All True*, as well as *Journey into Fear* (completely shot in January 1942), albeit "without the benefit of the services of those who worked on the [latter] picture and conceived its creation."²

Despite these circumstances, all of which occurred on the heels of RKO president George Schaefer's resignation in June, Welles continued to harbor the hope that the project would reach fruition within the OCIAA-MPSA (Motion Picture Society for the Americas) framework of state-film industry collaboration, *with or without* the cosponsorship of RKO—which was, he quipped, merely “rounding a bad Koerner.”³ As it happened, RKO did grant Welles the right to make changes to *Journey into Fear* (without pay) in October 1942, and to begin work in September on the postproduction of *It's All True* without compensation, and without any promises as to its release.⁴ During this period, while he was under contract to Twentieth Century-Fox as the male lead of *Jane Eyre* (dir. Robert Stevenson, 1944), Welles was able to do some rough cutting and assembling of footage shot in Rio de Janeiro for “Carnaval” and “Jangadeiros,” including the reel containing the celebrated entrance of the *São Pedro* raft into Guanabara Bay mentioned in chapter 2.⁵ There were logistical obstacles, however, to completing postproduction under these terms; as an actor and producer under contract to Fox, Welles had access only to an editing room with a basic movieola to assemble the silent footage, and he had yet to find a sponsor to fund the necessary sound mixing, composing, and other tasks through to release.

In October, he sought the assistance of Nelson Rockefeller, as coordinator of the OCIAA, in either persuading RKO to allow the film to be completed as planned (albeit in a three-episode version) or securing the support of another studio for its completion and release. Incredibly, Welles envisioned the premiere of a shortened version of *It's All True* side by side with Walt Disney's soon-to-be-released (and equally shortened) *Saludos Amigos* at the RCA-owned Radio City Music Hall in time for the winter holidays, and also at the Opera House in Woodstock, Illinois, a small town where in his youth he had attended the Todd School for Boys.⁶ Notwithstanding their marked contrast in sensibility, both films were based on “Good Will” ambassador tours and would have featured up-to-the-minute samba music by prominent Brazilian composers (Ary Barroso's “Aquarela do Brasil” graces the Brazilian segment of *Saludos Amigos*). Yet, in his cautiously diplomatic reply to Welles, Rockefeller, having just resigned from RKO's board of directors in June, seems hesitant to intervene at RKO at this particular juncture. He also demurs where other alternatives were concerned, such as Twentieth Century-Fox, preferring instead to issue the pro forma suggestion that Welles complete the project with whatever cosponsorship he could obtain on his own.⁷

It should be borne in mind that Welles had already contributed substantially to the OCIAA's cultural efforts in the form of radio shows and public lectures in Brazil, and he was about to produce a series of radio programs on the Caribbean and Latin America titled *Hello Americans*, with broadcasts beginning in November 1942 on the CBS network. Welles would also nar-

rate two English-language travelogues produced for OCIAA distribution by the Mexican Department of Tourism (*A Town in Old Mexico*, about the town of Puebla, and *Mexico City*), while Mercury actor Joseph Cotten would narrate a travelogue, *Veracruz*, under the same auspices.⁸ Just as these more modest contributions must have boosted Welles's optimism concerning the OCIAA's "goodwill" toward *It's All True*, for Rockefeller, they might well have stolen some of the fire from this project. By the time Welles returned to the United States in August 1942, both Mexico and Brazil had entered the war, and the task of "winning" the Brazilian government over to the Allied side by way of a promotional documentary film must have seemed less pressing.

Nonetheless, an expedition had been undertaken with great fanfare and effort to make this film with the OCIAA's blessing, and six months after the Welles-Rockefeller exchange, the question of how and whether *It's All True* should be completed was raised at a May 1943 meeting of the MPSA. Samuel Goldwyn, head of Columbia Studios and an ardent patriot as well as a patron of "quality" cinema, expressed concern over the uncertain fate of this important wartime project.⁹ For his part, Rockefeller assured the MPSA that the OCIAA would still cover any losses should an "A" picture be released. By this time, Welles had given up on plans to release the film through Twentieth Century-Fox, and, unfortunately, the project had been rejected by Warner Brothers in April 1943.¹⁰

Crucially, RKO, which was still in physical possession of the film elements, remained noncommittal, although it continued to entertain proposals from Welles to bring the project to fruition with the least amount of additional financial investment and effort. The studio appears to have rejected such a proposal in the fall of 1943, when Welles submitted a final revised script for the film—even though those working closely with Welles at the time (such as the late George Fanto and Richard Wilson) agreed that the script was overtly designed to placate the studio's newfound preference for more mainstream entertainment, and even though RKO vice president Phil Reisman and Brazilian foreign minister Oswaldo Aranha Jr. had been pleased with the new screenplay, which introduced the Andes episode as a segue between "My Friend Bonito" and "Jangadeiros."¹¹ Rather than recapitulate the narrative details of each episode, Welles sealed them in a "wraparound" narration delivered by himself, cast as a neophyte U.S. tourist to Latin America.

In early 1944, José Noriega completed a "very rough continuity" draft of a script to assist Welles in the editing of the "Corrida de Toros," the final bullfighting sequence of the episode, an estimated twelve minutes in length. In the draft, material already shot on location in Mexico appears to be woven into plans for newly staged material involving dialogue between Welles, as "tourist"-narrator, his young Mexican hosts, Marguerita and Miguel (uncast), and bullfighting fans, including the trainer now named "Juan," with minimal phrases given to Solórzano and Chico. As well, the draft calls for

diegetic music appropriate to the ritual of bullfighting, such as the *paso doble*.¹² Yet, nature's time clock was beginning to interfere with the smooth resumption of shooting for "My Friend Bonito": Jesús Vásquez ("Chico"), whom Foster had brought to Los Angeles in late 1941 to attend school and await Welles's return from South America, was rapidly evolving from a child into a young man,¹³ and one could only guess at the availability of the Mexican matadors, who were reaching the peak of their careers and beginning to fight abroad.

To keep the project alive, Welles purchased the entire footage to *It's All True* from RKO for \$200,000.¹⁴ There were even tentative plans as late as 1945 for Mercury to distribute the project as two separate films, *My Friend Bonito* and *It's All True* (the Brazilian episodes) through RKO Pictures.¹⁵ However, the war ended before the resuscitation of the film—in any form—could be accomplished.

Unable to raise enough funds to continue making payments to RKO for the rights to the nitrate negative (and with the box office disappointment of the 1946 theatrical production *Around the World in 80 Days* hounding him), Welles was forced to return the *It's All True* footage and sound material to the studio in December 1946.¹⁶ Then, upon departing for a lengthy sojourn in Europe and North Africa in 1947, he essentially abandoned all hopes of salvaging the project. What happened next is as much a product of cultural perception, compounded by the ineluctable fact that the surviving footage would remain in the hands of RKO and its successors, as it is the product of neglect or willpower on the part of those who participated in the production. The destiny of the film elements will be discussed in chapter 7; for the moment, I wish to compare the divergences in critical commentary along geocultural lines and their probable effect on the possibilities for the film's resuscitation, and indeed its completion as sketched by Welles. From this metacritique, a contemplation of alternative approaches to understanding the text, essential to retrieving its exotext, can take root.

TROPOLOGICAL MISENCOUNTERS

Although the film object appeared to have vanished after 1946, eclipsing in its wake the strenuous efforts at its production in 1941 and 1942, the legend of the film's making did not disappear entirely from public discourse. The name *It's All True* would continue to punctuate debates and histories of Welles's career, as well as the criticism of the U.S. presence in Mexican and Brazilian film culture in the twentieth century. The stakes and claims attached to these portrayals merit examination. First, a noticeable gap exists between North American and Latin American perspectives on the subject, raising questions of historiographical "reliability" of any single account, along with differences in cultural significance and valuation. Second, in shaping the pre-

vailing perceptions of the project, the Euro-American accounts have, for the most part, delayed the pace of the film's retrieval, and may even have jeopardized the possibility of its full material preservation.

In the exposition that follows, I am less interested in the political ideologies subtending different readings of the film *per se* (that subject is reserved for chapter 6) than in identifying the recurrent tropes that have been attached to the film and its maker up to the late nineties, the linkage of these tropes to certain geocultural and sociocultural positionings, the causal logic that has been attached to the historical trajectory of the film as a result, and the *material* consequences for the film of this tropological resilience.

Overall, the scholarly and journalistic writing on *It's All True* exemplifies to the point of exaggeration what Hayden White has termed the "fictions of factual representation" that result from the proximity of the writing of history to "imaginative" or literary writing.¹⁷ In many accounts, there is an unbridled slippage between these two domains, such that patently imagined events and fabricated circumstances are unselfconsciously presented in chronological form as bearing the weight of "fact." Seizing upon the film's "failure" (rather than its "censorship"), many evaluations of Welles's Hollywood career have constructed the demise of *It's All True* in 1942 as his "moment of truth" or, to cite the tropes more frequently used by Welles's biographers and critics, his "comeuppance," a "curse," or a "wound" (in Spanish, it could be translated as *cornada*).¹⁸ Although one finds a pronounced regional split (North-vs. South-identified) in the description of the project and the conclusions reached regarding its suspension, especially where the assessment of Welles's personal culpability is concerned, both camps have tended to be *auteurist* in orientation: they focus our attention on the actions of Welles's artist-persona and, in keeping with the romantic paradigm, have tended to stress his lone presence in the face of monolithic forces.¹⁹ It is not unusual to find phrases such as "a tragedy clouded Welles' future with RKO" or "Welles found that his world had collapsed around him."²⁰

A dyadic explanatory framework has emerged as a result, laced with an element of Oedipal (rather than Odyssean) drama in which Welles's youthful rebelliousness is emphasized in the face of rock-solid institutional authority (crudely evoking the power struggle between the young Kane and his banker-guardian Thatcher in *Citizen Kane*). This prepares fertile ground for the deployment of a binary evaluative logic that permits the writer to reach a morally grounded "verdict": Was Welles courageous/impudent, multi-tasking/disorganized, sociable/promiscuous? In his own narration of events, was he forthright and dedicated to his cause or deceitful and self-serving? Was the project orderly/chaotic, economical/costly, commercially viable and innovative or ill conceived and politically over the edge?²¹ And so on. Frequently, these value-laden dispositions provide the foregone conclusion, usually in the absence of any direct evidence, for "what really" happened in Brazil

(curiously, Mexico tends to be excluded from discussions of studio politics). The more impassioned accounts portray the director as the equivalent of an unruly and rambunctious bull or, alternately, as a valiant (albeit flamboyant and impetuous) matador.

For example, Lynn Shores, the RKO production manager assigned to the project in Rio, repeatedly complains in his missives to RKO headquarters about Welles's allegedly excessive and unnecessary demands on the crew, his unpredictability, and his lack of communication skills and good judgment. Writing to an official in the Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda (DIP) in April 1942, Shores states, "Despite repeated conversations with Mr. Richard Wilson . . . I find myself unable to *control* the tendency of Mr. Welles to use our cameras in matters which I do not *feel* are in accord with the *wishes* of the Brazilian government."²² Unfortunately, Shores's thinly nuanced and subjective impressions of Welles's conduct on location have been taken by film historians and critics as solid evidence of the director's mishandling of his film assignment.²³ In his extensive history of RKO Radio Studio, Richard Jewell depicts a beleaguered George Schaefer as having his own career jeopardized by the irrepressible and extravagant Welles, *It's All True* being the punctuation point of chronic unruliness and excess.²⁴

BLAMING IT ALL ON RIO

In many of the Euro-American accounts that attempt to summarize the production experience, the binary construct takes on the tinge, if not full-blooded stain, of the neocolonial imaginary—reserving know-how, efficiency, cleanliness, righteousness, and integrity for protagonists originating in the North (more precisely, residing within the confines of the film industry), and squalor, bedlam, mystification, excess, and sloth (not to mention an overall seductive and corrupting influence) for unnamed and numerous "natives" in contact with Welles in the Southern Hemisphere.²⁵ For example, in a letter to RKO, Lynn Shores complains of the "heat, strange food, our inability to get anything moving in the speedy American way."²⁶ The implication in most summaries of this period of Welles's career is that if it were not for *It's All True*, Welles's relationship to RKO might have remained intact, at least long enough to permit the fulfillment of his contract and the completion of film projects already under way.

Already positioned by auteurist discourse at both ends of the production history of *It's All True* as its sole author and the source of its downfall, the aging, regressing, and "grotesque" body of Orson Welles appears converted in these narratives into a transducer for the delicate strategic relationship between the United States and Latin America. Always a secondary consideration in the Euro-American discourse, this relationship has been characterized (implicitly or explicitly) as a tenuous alliance built around the temporary

need for hemispheric security, however the latter might be defined.²⁷ Thus, Welles and his alleged tropical misadventures form a symbolic buffer against the perceived threat of a meaningful shift in intercultural relations—a potential result of an openness in strategy and structure in the film to the diverse forms of culture portrayed in each national context. One sees a curious discursive resemblance here to Donald Duck, whose maladroitness keeps him from successfully wooing his attractive southern “neighbors” in Disney’s animated travelogue, *The Three Caballeros*. More specifically, the tropicalization of Welles as the most accessible target for dissemination provides the rhetorical means of restoring a sense of integrity and stability for the film industry (and, by extension, the “American way of life”), perceived by some contemporary observers as having been placed at risk by Welles’s overly friendly attitude toward his host and film subjects during the making of *It’s All True*. This institutional stability, defended in subsequent years by the aggressive exportation of U.S. film product and investment capital to Latin America, remains dependent on an international division of trade and labor whereby the North is the locus of technical “know-how” and the South, a bountiful provider of “raw materials.” This is graphically illustrated in the opening sequence of Busby Berkeley’s film *The Gang’s All Here* (1943), in which we see Carmen Miranda in a New York nightclub skit being “unloaded” together with sacks of tropical fruit, coffee, and sugar onto the docks of New York in exchange for an official welcome by the city’s “mayor.” According to this more conventional and schematic formula of exchange, Welles and crew should have been the uncompromising harbingers of the modern American “way of life” as a criterion for partial citizenship (to retain U.S. hegemony) in a quasi-democratic hemisphere. In a historical “reverse angle,” Technicolor film and Coca-Cola should have been only the beginning of the airfreight unloaded onto the tarmac of Santos Dumont airport.²⁸

Interestingly, the anxiety around Orson Welles’s allegedly unprofessional conduct, along with the discursive openness of the film project, was shared by members of the contemporary carioca elite. Fearing an association in the film with the “negative” side of the North-South equation, thereby creating a lost opportunity for such partial citizenship, they came to view Welles at best as a charlatan and at worst as a shameless meddler and peddler of all that would link Brazil with underdevelopment vis-à-vis the United States. Edmar Morel commented on the social ostracism suffered by Welles following his association with the rustic and outspoken *jangadeiro* Jacaré; and headlines published in conservative tabloids, such as *A Noite*, once the “Carnaval” reenactment was in progress, are indicative of the nature of some of this elitist anxiety: “Orson Welles’s Picture Promises to Be Very ‘Dark’ on the Screen.”²⁹

As if to confirm the historical basis for these fears, and reiterating the neo-colonial figurations of Latin America in Hollywood “B” horror, comedy, and detective thriller films from the thirties to the fifties, more than one Welles

biographer has repeatedly referred to the Brazilian participants of *It's All True* as "natives,"³⁰ also stressing the sexual, digestive, and toxicological permeability of the director's body during his Brazilian sojourn. Evolved examples of this tendency appear in Charles Higham's *Orson Welles: The Rise and Fall of an American Genius*, in which the northeastern Brazilian fishermen are referred to as "humorous, tiny, and quaint." Higham also liberally paraphrases the 1942 communiqués of RKO publicist Tom Pettey, relating how, in Rio de Janeiro, Welles was "[s]pending his days shooting costumed people batting balloons and throwing confetti. . . . he [Welles] suffered from loose bowels and 'the disposition of a teething baby.' For lunch he had spaghetti, black beans, and cheese; at night he went to the casino to gamble. . . . money was very short."³¹

In passages such as these, Welles is made to embody the two variants of the "grotesque" that Peter Stallybrass and Allon White have associated with modernizing, Western middle-class discourse: that of the "'Other' of the defining group or self" (whereby Welles figures as a maverick director in a heavily self-regulated industry) and that of a "boundary phenomenon of hybridization or inmixing, in which self and other become enmeshed in an inclusive, heterogeneous, dangerously unstable zone."³² One is tempted to read the film critics' symbolic manipulation of the twenty-seven-year-old director's body not merely as a mechanism of compensation for the hypertrophy of Welles's "genius" as an artist³³—already avidly seized as a target for irony and derision by the Hollywood trade press—but as a sign of ideological *resistance* toward Welles's willingness to bypass culturally and institutionally prescribed protocols of conduct. Welles's transgression could thus be perceived as deliberately "confusing" the two halves of the hemisphere (or, for the Brazilian elite, two incontrovertible halves of Brazilian society). To return to the metonyms of the Higham quotation, it is not the *size* of Welles's lunch that so impresses Higham (and perhaps Pettey), but the *combination* of foods therein: diversity comes to be associated with indigestion, implying cultural and racial, as well as organic, contamination rather than simply "overabundance." Alternately, the feminization of Latin America as a fertile territory (symbolized by Carmen Miranda's body as an extension of a cornucopia, there for the "mayor's" taking in *The Gang's All Here*) has prompted both contemporary observers and several biographers to emphasize Welles's virility as a womanizer in partial explanation for his "erratic" behavior on the set. Throughout the spring and summer of 1942, the Brazilian press also reported that Welles was working "quite hard" on his film *It's All True*.

Following the logic of the North-South division of labor referred to earlier, the indeterminacy of boundaries belongs precisely to that which lacks order and rationality: to those phenomena and places that are associated with the body. At the same time, while Cartesian dualism (and the aspiration of the critics to be placed on the side of "reason") might provide the

philosophical basis for conflation of the South with the primitive, the precise association of certain bodily functions with a region is indicative of the following: First, the physical body can be taken as a symbolic expression of the material and structural attributes of societies (or “social bodies”) in that region. Second, “the scope of the body acting as a [symbolic] medium is restricted by the demands of the social system to be expressed.”³⁴ In this case, the image of Welles’s porous body in the clutches of the tropics is taken to be an expression of the *modus operandi* of the social system(s) of Latin American countries as perceived from a Euro-American standpoint. The perception that these societies (or classes, for the Brazilian elite) are “less highly structured” than their neighbors to the north is, of course, largely imaginary rather than empirical in foundation. It is shaped by a normative concept (modeled, in turn, on a perception of the industrialized self) of how social systems *should* function: “The less highly structured, the more the value on informality, the more the tendency to abandon reason and to follow panics or crazes, and *the more the permitted scope for bodily expressions of abandonment*.”³⁵ Hence the need for northern intervention in the affairs of the South.

The lack of organization and rationality is perceived, moreover, as endemic rather than transitional. How else to explain the liberties that have been taken with Latin American geography—the geophysical “body”—in these accounts, centuries after the initial period of exploration and colonization had ended? The studio log of the Rio rushes (conducted by either RKO or Paramount) confuses the famous monument of Christ the Redeemer (standing atop the gentle slopes of Corcovado mountain in Rio de Janeiro) with the Christ of the Andes, a monument erected in 1904 as a symbol of peace between Chile and Argentina in Usapallata Pass, the highest attainable point in the Andes cordillera that forms the Chilean-Argentine border. A relatively recent Welles biography repeats the error, referring to the “snowcapped mountains” towering above Rio de Janeiro, and so on.³⁶

In point of fact, and in many ways, social life in Brazil under the Estado Novo (1937–45) was even *more* structured and rule-bound than what could be found in the United States, and this indeed produced some friction where Welles’s desire to document Brazilian social reality was concerned (see chapter 6). Euro-American observers have thus mistaken activities that were ritualistic (and, to some extent, state-regulated) negotiations of physical and hierarchical social bodies, such as Carnival, club performances, and beach-going, with what Mary Douglas has called “effervescent” or free-form social behavior.³⁷

These descriptions of Welles and the Rio film shoot greatly exaggerate what might have occurred in actuality, bordering on and occasionally plunging into apocryphal assertions; yet they need not be hastily dismissed as free-floating or careless expressions of Euro-American paranoia toward the

southern latitudes. Reflecting immediate concerns that a mutable social order would be made more vulnerable (or porous) to the “backwardness” of neighboring societies, the primitivization of Welles follows a strong precedent already established by contemporary treatments of Welles’s Latin American projects, especially in the Hollywood trade press but also in more “sober” venues such as the *New York Times*. For example, rather than provide substantive information on the new projects Welles was developing at RKO and on the theatrical stage (*Native Son*) subsequent to the May 1941 release of *Citizen Kane*, *The Hollywood Reporter* relates that “RKO, slightly behind schedule on production, is urging Welles to quick action. . . . Welles is at present loafing.” And although it does treat the proposed adaptation of *The Way to Santiago* as a legitimate industrial film project, the same periodical goes on to label this spy thriller, which would have featured mainly foreign journalists and Mexican government and union officials, a “native film” based on its Mexican location.³⁸ The superficiality of these commentaries belies their historical effectivity. Just as the later accounts have distracted or discouraged scholars from pursuing the surviving footage in the vaults, the earlier tropological dismissals hint at the possibility that cultural misperception or discomfort might have contributed to the film’s suspension in 1942. In particular, as Robert Stam and Welles himself suggested, one should not underestimate the power of the racist reactions of RKO personnel to the pro-filmic events. In several reports back to the studio from Rio, one finds Lynn Shores describing the film in these terms: “just carnival nigger [*sic*] singing and dancing, of which we already have piles.”³⁹

At the same time, there is little doubt that with *It’s All True* Welles was taking the resignification of the term *American* beyond his critique (launched by way of parody and hyperbolization in *Citizen Kane*) of excessive materialism, and the hijacking of democratic institutions by rogue capital. The idea was to reinvest the term with the promise of democracy and freedom of expression and bring it more into alignment with the geoculturally inclusive parameters implicit in the expanded term *Pan-American* then being officially embraced by the authors and promoters of the Good Neighbor Policy. To accomplish this, it was necessary to bring the portrayal of Latin American societies out of the shadowy realm of underdevelopment with which they had been associated and, beyond this, to illustrate the complexity of competing paradigms of social order (the multiplicity of “social bodies”) to be found within a single national context such as Brazil, and just as certainly among the different nations in the region.

Correspondingly, Welles’s self-designated role while making the film *It’s All True* was as cultural interpreter, mediating between two (or more) estranged yet economically and politically interdependent worlds. A press bulletin issued by his personal representative at Mercury Productions, Herbert Drake, in the spring of 1942, quotes Welles as saying:

I am here to find out all that I can in the time that I have and to translate it to the public in two mediums at my command—movies and the radio. . . . I have found too little of Brazilian lore translated into English and that which I have found in English, *both historical and literary*, has not always been authentic. To overcome this lack of written information, we have organized a research group, a half dozen or more of the most capable writers and research workers in Rio. . . . Our picture must be authentic.⁴⁰

One can only marvel at how this act of interpretation, relying on the work of local experts and directed at a hemispheric audience, could lead to a preoccupation with Welles's own bodily excess by "contamination." Equally baffling is how a film dedicated precisely to "setting the record straight" and to promoting the acceptance of cultural and social "Others" on their own terms could provide the pretext for repeated acts of tropological mislabeling and the reassertion of a neocolonial division of cultural capital between "upper" and "lower" hemispheric halves, the gap between them forming a chasm from which the rediscovered film has yet to reemerge.

"CIDADÃO WELLES"

At the core of the differences between the Euro-American and Latin American critical accounts of *It's All True* is the depiction of Welles's ongoing struggle with the Hollywood film industry, in which RKO Radio was but his initial and most visible antagonist. Many Euro-American accounts have written off Welles's inability to complete the film as an almost karmic conclusion to his alleged propensity for personal and professional excess, ranging (in contradictory fashion) from the cost, scale, and number of his projects undertaken simultaneously, to his hypersociality, and even sexual promiscuity, during impromptu and extended leisure hours. By contrast, Latin American accounts have tended to portray Welles as a sensitive yet uncompromising artist and public intellectual who dared to venture beyond the limits of Hollywood production protocols and insisted on the right to express his ideas on film in the open defiance of men (from William Randolph Hearst to Floyd Odlum and Getúlio Vargas) more politically powerful than himself.

In an article on Brazilian director Rogério Sganzerla's efforts to recapture Welles's Latin American experience in the film *Nem Tudo É Verdade*, fellow filmmaker and critic Orlando Senna characterizes *It's All True* as a "Panamerican Bullfight," starting with participant observer Welles at the margins of the "[b]ullfighting ring, five in the afternoon, Mexico City. Orson Welles chews the end of a Havana cigar, observes the dance of the man and the creature on the sand and the movement of Norman Foster's crew behind the *burladeros* [wooden barriers placed in the bullring for protection]." Senna then goes on to assert that Welles, in *Citizen Kane*, took on with rivet-

ing force the story, narrated in flashback, not only of a dying American tycoon, but of “capitalism itself in expansion,” remarking on how RKO underestimated the degree to which their “Wonder Boy could portray/fictionalize with such *piercing sharpness, with such shocking precision and clarity* (because multifaceted) Mr. William Randolph Hearts [*sic*], multimillionaire, owner of the largest newspaper chain in the world.”⁴¹ Likewise, critical admiration in Brazil for Orson Welles as an auteur was bolstered by his willingness to proceed with *It's All True* at the risk of straining, and then losing, his working arrangement with RKO. In the Brazilian press, Welles emerged as a sympathetic David fighting an invisible, yet to Brazilians increasingly familiar, Goliath.⁴²

At the same time, owing to its auteurist orientation, the Latin American discourse on *It's All True* shares with the dominant Euro-American narratives the tendency to place Welles's personage at the epicenter of the production events and their immediate aftermath. Concomitantly, they each build on the bias toward the masculine identity of the director, championing the ideal of the “macho maverick,” adding yet another set of stakes to the valuation of Welles's alternately courageous and licentious conduct. Initially, the Latin American “Wellesocentrism” was aided by the OCIAA's vigorous promotion of the director as “Good Will” ambassador at the time of his arrival, whereby he became the frequent object of newsreels and newspaper columns, but it has also stemmed from a genuine appreciation over the years for the aesthetic, thematic, and strategic aspects of Welles's approach to filmmaking on location—in itself a recognition of how *It's All True* belongs to Welles as auteur. In particular, there is a sense in which his parodic critique of power structures, his iconoclastic modernist aesthetics, and his ability to construct dignified and starkly beautiful portrayals of disenfranchised peoples at remote or peripheral locations all held a special appeal for postwar generations of filmmakers, especially in Brazil. Although these filmmakers were concerned at the time with the disparities produced by conservative modernization and the oppression of military rule enforced from without, they were buoyed by the possibility of producing feature-length films using scant resources and documentary-style strategies to address these concerns, as best they could in a heavily policed public sphere.⁴³

During the film's production in 1942, the press coverage that quickly proliferated throughout Brazil consisted mainly of reportage on its progress and the whereabouts of its crew and participants, interwoven with speculation regarding Welles's first impressions of Brazil and what kind of film seemed to be taking shape before the observers' own eyes: Which aspects of national geography, culture, and society would be included? Would these aspects be treated respectfully, their original character intact, with the holistic dimensions of Brazilian life in evidence? These press reports formed the foundation for the inclusion of references to *It's All True* and Welles's Latin American travels in histories of national cinemas, such as the chronology of Chilean

cinema by Jacqueline Mouesca and Carlos Orellana, which mentions Welles as having viewed the feature film *Escândalo* (*Scandal*, 1942), by popular national director Jorge Délano “Coke,” during his stop in Santiago.⁴⁴ In other words, the question lingered as to how the South American gaze on Welles and his budding oeuvre would be returned, given his capacity to contemplate the existence of a Latin film culture.

In the contemporary reports on the film’s production, one finds, above all, a concern among film critics with the degree to which Welles was indeed adopting a realist approach to his subject matter, in anticipation of the film’s distribution in the international circuit of nonoccupied nations. This concern with cinematic realism (read here as fidelity to the phenomenal world as it is emically construed) was undoubtedly heightened by the egregious gaffes in cross-cultural representation already committed in many of Hollywood’s so-called Good Neighbor exports to Latin America.

Writing for the scholarly and state-sanctioned journal *Cultura Política* in 1942, Brazilian cultural critic Pinheiro de Lemos condemned Hollywood’s predominant portrayal of Brazilian Carnival: “There is that humiliating impression they hold of our [filmgoing] public: how else could there be any justification for those idiotic titles—*Sublime Love*, *Illusion of Love*, *Cupid*, *The Daring Street Urchin*—placed on American films for Brazilian distribution, or for those subtitles invariably packed with slang and bad taste?”⁴⁵

The stakes regarding the chosen mode of cinematic representation were particularly high in the case of *It’s All True*: no Hollywood feature film had ever had its main action shot on Brazilian soil (Walt Disney had mostly collected data and sketches on his 1941 voyage to be used later in the studio). Moreover, the express purpose of Welles’s Brazilian shoot, as per the original request of the DIP, was to take advantage of Brazilian local scenery not as “background material” to a generic plot elaborated in Hollywood but to document what was deemed to be of interest *for* Brazil in its positioning in relation to the outside world (hence, the DIP’s close supervision of the shoot, for better and, as will be noted in chapter 6, for worse). After visiting the Cinédia set of “Carnaval,” carioca film critic Vinicius de Moraes reassured his readers that Welles was taking every precaution to ensure that his representation of Carnival would reflect Brazilian lived experience and local cultural traditions as they were actually practiced: “His vision [of Brazil] is sometimes a bit blunt, but he never errs on the side of injustice. And Orson Welles has understood, as no one else ever has, the importance of our character, our mistakes, our indulgences, our—how shall I say—negative qualities. He gives great importance to this, and to the collective character that is forged from nothing, a Brazilian impulse, an identity that is self-taught, shaped from the best and the worst of influences, and in truth, independently.”⁴⁶

Another advocate for Welles’s approach at an early stage of the production was “Jangadeiros” researcher and journalist Edmar Morel, who wrote:

"Don't try to see Orson as a romantic lover on the screen, nor even as the impassioned young man at the film's end who dies in the arms of the blond girl. Orson is different. His films are historically real. As a reporter, he will live in the environment, feel up close the warmth and the palpitation of life, and then make a film like *Citizen Kane*. . . . Please receive Orson Welles as the man who will show Ceará to the world!"⁴⁷

These first-blush ruminations, which soon developed into a debate (along conservative-progressive, state-civilian ideological lines) over just how much realism was desirable in a film intended for export, were followed by other preoccupations. From May through July 1942, one finds expressions of anxiety over the impact that Jacaré's disappearance and RKO's withdrawal of support would have on the film's completion and, in the wake of Welles's departure, apprehension over the ultimate fate of this groundbreaking project. Would the expectations of so many Brazilians, based on Welles's word of honor and evident labors on location, finally be compensated in a film that would recognize them for the first time on the U.S. screen as an energetic and virtuous people, as a modernizing nation-state, and as a bountiful font of rich, syncretic cultural expression worthy of international admiration?

The validation of *It's All True* as a cross-cultural text from the Brazilian perspective was not instantaneous but came about by way of a gradual process of assessment and comparison between Orson Welles "in the flesh," in the local public eye, and in his screen-immortalized character, Charles Foster Kane; between Welles as "Good Will" ambassador and other Hollywood envoys to Latin America; and between Welles's attention to Brazilian culture and the insensitivity of most U.S. industrial offerings on Brazilian city center screens (such as the musical *That Night in Rio*, 1941, in which, according to de Moraes, Carmen Miranda seems to be more "Hindu" than Brazilian).⁴⁸ Referring to Welles as "Citizen Kane," one Bahian newspaper describes him as "a barely 26 year-old boy [*sic*], tall, robust, and blond . . . a legitimately American type, from the land of Uncle Sam."⁴⁹ However, he would soon lose this stereotypical veneer. The caption originally published beneath the photograph in figure 25 reads: "Possessing all of the qualities of an intelligent man, Orson Welles is always like this: smiling and mingling in the midst of the people, without worrying about his appearance or a 'flashing bulb' of any kind. In the gravure, we see the happy American 'boy' on Iracema Beach when, yesterday afternoon, he had just finished participating in a jangada race at captain Jerônimo's side, from which, as one can see, he returned wet as a baby chick."⁵⁰

Underneath this "*yanqui* troping," fueled, it can be surmised, by an apprehensive fascination with the stationing of the foreign gaze (wielded by Welles and crew) at close quarters, is a portrayal of Welles's human vulnerability—and therefore social accessibility and cultural adaptability. This double-stranded approach was accompanied by open praise for his unabashedly in-



Figure 25. From the front page of *O Povo*, March 1942: Orson Welles with Edmar Morel (*left*) and Fernando Pinto (*right*) on Iracema Beach. Courtesy Edmar Morel.

dependent stance toward a formidable U.S. cultural apparatus, which he in so many respects had been sent to represent, and presumably to fortify and expand. In contrast to the allegedly lackluster or overly refined performance of previous U.S. emissaries to Brazil, such as “Latin-lover types” Tyrone Power and Ramón Novarro, Rio-based film critic Celestino Silveira welcomed

Welles as “the man who learned to speak truths, naked and uncooked, to satisfy the curiosity of the native reporter,” especially regarding the “distortion of South American themes in ‘yankee’ cinema to date.”⁵¹ Implicit in the comparison of the sincere Welles to the suave, star of the moment Novarro is an acknowledgment of Welles’s ability to embrace the popular, and thereby relinquish the customarily distanced politeness of VIP tourists. Welles’s allowance for informality in diplomatic relations is reiterated in some contemporary U.S. reports (although not always with the flattery intended by Silveira). In a special layout on the film in *Life* magazine, one finds the following captions under photos taken on location: “Sweating like all cariocas, Orson Welles aims a 16mm camera at revelers”; and “Welles (foreground) feels good [*sic*] at one of the low-class ‘people’s dances.’”⁵² Welles’s display of genuine curiosity in Brazil as a sovereign nation and his courage in frankly expressing his opinions quickly led to his adoption as an honorary “Brazilian” by the local intelligentsia. This, in effect, signaled the creation of an interstitial subject positioning for the young filmmaker, summarized in the hybrid epithet, “Citizen Kane carioca,”⁵³ an optimum position for someone aspiring to the role of cultural interpreter.

The friendly deflation and demystification of the Yankee director in the local press—in short, his Brazilianization—was enhanced by Welles’s declared determination to go against the grain of industrial protocols to make a more “Brazilian” film, even “build a studio in Brazil” so as to stimulate the growth of the Brazilian film industry.⁵⁴ Hence, *It’s All True* ceased to be perceived as a mere public relations expedition for Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy. (Welles’s stance on cinematic sovereignty might be contrasted with Disney’s mission to investigate the potential for the material *expansion* of the U.S. film industry into South America.)⁵⁵ Welles’s films as a whole (though there were only three films at this time, including *It’s All True*) were praised in the local literature as the bona fide fruit of versatile talent, cultural insight, and sacrificial effort, accumulating cultural capital and attracting even more attention within Latin American critical discourse as a result. As early as February 1942, the earnestness of Welles’s “Good Will” gestures, including *It’s All True*, was perceived as already attenuating an important impasse in inter-American relations (the misrepresentation of Brazil in U.S. media) even if, as Silveira was careful to remark, *no film were to materialize from the effort*.⁵⁶ While I have already begun to speculate on what kind of a film could have resulted from this exercise in cultural translation and validation, it remains to be seen what within it might have resonated with the cinematic culture and aspirations of Latin American cineastes and cinephiles, if not with the standard fare of wartime Hollywood. The possibilities for such a resonance reside not only in Welles’s performance as cultural ambassador but also in his cinematic rendering of Latin American history and culture as auteur.

AUTEURS AWEIGH: RESITUATING THE AUTHOR, REINSTATING THE TEXT

At this juncture, it might seem convenient to separate out the task of historicizing from the task of interpretation: to let the facts of the film's suspension and the material from which a text can be extrapolated merely speak for themselves. However, given the continuities between earlier and later accounts of the film, North and South, most of those "facts" have remained embedded in representations that are equally inflected by cultural and ideological bias. On the other hand, the points of intersection between historiography and creative interpretation are not without their heuristic utility, even as they tend to obscure "what really happened" and ignore the materiality of the text-in-form. First, by revealing the historical climate and cultural expectations in which the film was produced, the neocolonialist narratives are helpful in locating sources of pressure and influence with regard to the film's production history, even though those sources are rarely named, owing in part to the reliance on a mythologized Welles as a focalizer in many Euro-American accounts. Second, these interpretations have not circulated without methodological consequences for the historiography of the film and, more broadly, for Welles's film work outside the United States (which is to say, a major portion of his career). Perhaps a closer examination of these effects can point productively to alternative paths and tools of retrieval. The task of productively inverting or reversing discursive discouragement is facilitated by a "symptomatic reading" that uncovers meaningful absences not in the "depths" of a given narrative or narrative cluster but "by its side: on its margins, at that limit where it ceases to be what it claims to be."⁵⁷

Paradoxically, and most centrally, the conversion of *It's All True* into the "trash of history" can be traced to the analytical biases of the auteur approach to film criticism. This is especially true when auteurism is seasoned by the tropes of a neocolonialist stance toward Latin American cultures and societies. In the course of furnishing a popular schema for a hermeneutics not only of individual texts but also of film directors' careers, the auteur theory has provided fertile ground for causal assumptions regarding the *historical fates* of film works and the *historical logic* of actions taken by the film industry. Namely, the parameters of investigation, as well as narration, are limited to the professional life of the auteur, whom one tends to find pitted in a relentless struggle against industrial forces to retain control over his or her work's final shape.

Most of those who have followed Welles's film career closely would agree that his difficulty in obtaining financing or studio approval for his films—most notably *Heart of Darkness* (1939), *The Magnificent Ambersons*, and *It's All True*—as well as the many years he spent in a peripatetic search across Eu-

rope and the Mediterranean for shooting locations and production support, conform to the romantic vision of the talented and worldly yet industrially marginalized artist that has been the bread and butter of the auteur theory.⁵⁸ At the heart of this theory is its fundamental critique of corporate monopoly and excessive industrialization of the filmmaking process, primarily the fetishization of technology and a hypertrophied division of labor. What is forgotten in many Euro-American narratives is just how important these margins can be for the productivity of an auteur like Welles: one's engagement with, or unrepentant positioning in, the "margins" (defined politically, aesthetically, culturally, or socially) always introduces an element of "risk" vis-à-vis the industry and can thus tip the balance toward the truncation or cessation of a project.

Yet these same margins can also give the auteur the independence and moral strength with which to confront the industrial Goliath (in effect, as Welles pointed out in *Citizen Kane*, a two-headed monster, which spans the print media and film industries). Welles's protracted periods of travel to, and engagement with, industrial and sociocultural "peripheries" can be seen as having an enriching effect on his ability to articulate and synthesize disparate sources of aesthetic influence and frames of cultural reference within a single work such as *It's All True*, imbuing it with the modern "baroque" sensibility that is characteristic of his later films, such as *Othello* and *Mr. Arkadin*, and so helpful to its potential as an inter-American film. In Welles's case, however, the romantic mode of emplotment has also been deployed as a mode of historical explanation: his resilient and independent stance toward the studio system has been translated into his sole agency in bringing about the demise of his own films and, ultimately, his Hollywood career. For example, Charles Higham has claimed that it was "bad planning" to attempt to complete *It's All True* and *The Magnificent Ambersons* concurrently, and that Welles should have postponed the shooting of the latter; on the other hand, Welles "ruined the Mexican film" by summoning Norman Foster, who had been assigned as location director, back to Hollywood to direct *Journey into Fear*.⁵⁹ In making these assertions, Higham disregards the very real pressures of RKO on Mercury to churn out new productions for 1942–43 release, not to mention Welles's ambassadorial appointment at a time of war, which increased the urgency of accelerating or temporarily suspending Mercury's existing studio projects.

One can only speculate that the particular stress on Welles's actions, especially when they were perceived as leading to "disaster," might have been due to his having come so close in contractual terms to embodying the authorial ideal in a Hollywood setting. Although he had to submit script ideas and budget projections to RKO management for prior approval, unlike most directors under studio contract, Welles was granted virtually complete con-

trol over the production process through the administration of his own company, Mercury Productions, as well as the right to the final cut on his first three films.⁶⁰ Yet this advantage has been converted by critical observers into a peculiar “burden of representation,” to borrow Kobena Mercer’s phrase.⁶¹ In the alleged absence of another “American masterpiece” like *Citizen Kane*, Welles has been blamed for shirking his studio obligations and spoiling excellent and rare professional opportunities by “irresponsibly” pursuing filmmaking abroad, detached from the mecca of the movie world. Although other auteurs, such as Erich von Stroheim and Jean Renoir, deviated in similar ways from the industrial norm, Welles has received particular opprobrium from critics who have precisely acknowledged (and professionally benefited from) his status as an auteur. As French director and auteur critic François Truffaut has aptly noted, “Orson Welles’s career is . . . difficult, but not any more so than that of Carl Dreyer or Jean Cocteau, and his successful activity as an actor, his star personality have removed some of the urgency in his search for financing which is the lot of all filmmakers.”⁶²

In historiographical terms, the romantic mode of emplotment informing the auteur-centric narratives has simplified the protagonism, process, and timing according to which the suspension of *It’s All True* occurred, focusing our attention on isolated moments and aspects of Welles’s contractual relationship with RKO, in the manner of an “event history”: the negative March preview of *The Magnificent Ambersons* at Pomona and George Schaefer’s June departure from RKO, for example. This simplification has produced a disregard for a host of other equally if not more significant historical determinants and agencies that contributed to the shape of *It’s All True* and its impossibility as an RKO-OCIAA release during World War II. As I hope to show in the chapters that follow, a broadening and diversification of causal focus is possible without abandoning the constructive aspects (including the structuralist orientation) of the auteur theory as a tool for deciphering and evaluating film texts.⁶³ To help situate and reconceptualize the historical burden associated with authorship, I introduce the notion of “political and economic authorship” as being operative within the immediate context of the film’s production and planned release. By pointing to the possibility of authorship on the other “side” of the industrial equation, this concept allows stress to be placed on the agency of hidden or overlooked individual decision makers, such as Nelson Rockefeller or Joseph Breen (as RKO studio head and as the director of Hollywood’s Production Code Administration [PCA]). In setting cultural and industrial policy, such figures can be seen as making, breaking, or at least shaping the future of individual films and even the larger cultural trends of which they are a part.

Equally important is the widening of the focus around the agency of the auteur to include the complex creative and intercultural dynamics of *collaboration*. This approach is encouraged by the fact that Welles’s Mercury Produc-

tions was a partnership operation, with actors and screenwriters working as “teams.” Attention to multiple authorship, or collaboration, is especially warranted in the case of *It’s All True*, given the crucial input of Edmar Morel, Robert Meltzer, and Herivelto Martins in the Brazilian episodes, and Welles’s reliance on José Noriega for culturally authentic and socially accepted portrayals of bullfighting in “My Friend Bonito,” as well as his willingness to credit Norman Foster as codirector and Foster’s interest (parallel to Welles’s) in continuing to work in Mexico and make films about bullfighting.⁶⁴ By zooming in and tracking back, thereby attenuating or complicating the monolithic dimensions of the industry as well as the romanticism surrounding the individual auteur, respectively, these analytical frames pose new questions for the causality of the film’s suspension, while illuminating the cultural and industrial politics and aesthetic attributes of the work in progress.

Ironically, with the stress on the agency and fate of the individual auteur, the concept of *It’s All True* as a *text*, properly speaking, quickly became lost in the twists and turns of secondary speculation regarding the film’s disruption and alleged disappearance. In the wake of the 1942 stalemate at RKO, a cloud of charges of artistic incompleteness had cast its shadow over large patches of the remainder of Welles’s career. Hence, the “negative” of the suspension, based mainly on received knowledge and conjecture (rather than on the collective memory of cast and crew) has taken the place of an acknowledgment of a work in progress in most Euro-American accounts. In the most egregious cases, the work itself, which is unfortunately fragmentary *as a result* of its suspension, has been denied the possibility of *ever* having vaguely resembled a text, reflected in David Thomson’s categorical and presumptuous dismissal: “There was never a movie there, only an extravagant, self-destructive gesture, and the aftermath of guilt.”⁶⁵ Like the metonymic slippages that swap the verdant slopes of Rio’s Corcovado mountain for the highest snowcapped reaches of the southern Andes, the key words of this phrase—“never a movie,” “extravagant,” “self-destructive,” and “guilt”—point to the difficulty for many of conjugating Welles’s professional activities as an American auteur with the southern latitudes of the expedition. Failing to fully acknowledge the larger cultural and political context in which the Mexican and Brazilian shoots were carried out, many Euro-American auteurist narratives stumble upon the apparent cultural “illogic” of *It’s All True*: just what kind of a film could be produced from documenting events in “those” kinds of places, and what was a quintessentially “modern” and “American” auteur like Welles doing at its helm? In doing so, they echo the responses of RKO executives to the footage, mentioned in chapters 6 and 7.

To return to the common thread of the physical body as polysemic signifier, Welles’s body not only appears as a transducer for the negotiation of North-South relations but also effectively masks and displaces the body of the film text itself. Or, rather, according to the language and logic of these

narratives, what is to be substantively produced from contact with the marginal zones of the tropics is tantamount to *excrement*. This association takes on literal dimensions both in Leaming's biography of Welles and in Higham's account of the Rio shoot. Returning to the aforementioned Higham quotation, one finds a reference to the director's psychological regression (a "teething baby") coupled with "loose bowels" (incontinence caused by contact with the tropics). In another passage, diarrhea is associated specifically with visits to a garbage-strewn favela, losing money by gambling (threatening the solvency of the project), and an encounter with strange food and frolicking confetti throwers (the immediate source of bodily and budgetary incontinence and regression). To the extent that one can attach a text to this scenario, it could hardly be said to have narrative coherence, or anything so articulated and appealing as an aesthetic. As Mary Douglas reminds us, "All such physical events, defecation, . . . [etc.], and their products, uniformly carry a pejorative sign for formal discourse."⁶⁶

Moving from the supratextual symptom or trope to the more empirical indicators of the textual referent, one can discern that, due to its suspected racial and vernacular content and improvisational method (as reported by Shores), the unfinished work has remained confined to the margins of cultural and artistic intelligibility, if indeed it can be said to ever have existed. As Cartesian logic would have it, "[A]ll knowledge comes from the [modern Western] mind, and the object . . . has nothing to teach us."⁶⁷ So the aborted text returns as a scar or "wound" on the auteur's body: a blemish rather than a creative turning point in the director's film work as a whole. To underscore just how deeply discursive biases and cultural perceptions can affect the task of historiography, it is worth noting that Thomson's denial of the text's viability was published *after* having viewed the 1993 documentary reconstruction of *It's All True*—that is, after nearly sixty minutes of original footage had been preserved, assembled, and set within a narrative and historical context for all to view. Yet if one carefully rereads Shores's, Thomson's, and Higham's commentaries, the theoretical possibility of a "text" is not being rejected altogether (indeed, Walt Disney and others have generated "viable" texts from such expeditions). Rather, they imply, the *ethnographic* dimensions of this film—its value as a documentary—have rendered its text either incoherent or without artistic/industrial value. In this opinion, Welles's interpretation of his role as diplomat and ethnographer, not interloping filmmaker, took the project off course, or "out of order."

Conversely, the viability of the text of *It's All True* has rarely been questioned in Latin America, where it has been reclaimed, validated, and speculated upon at various intervals within oral, written, and cinematic memory and criticism, albeit in dispersed and occasionally disseminated form. This validation, which has fueled the enduring hope of the film's retrieval despite

the miles that have separated the footage from its Latin American shooting locations, stems partly from the print legacy providing hard evidence of the filmmaking process as it unfolded in 1942. And, in direct contrast to many of the Euro-American accounts, it points to a more flexible concept of documentary techniques in relation to a filmmaker's creative expression. To wit, a director's inscription of a subjective interpretation, and even fictionalization, of events may be acceptable in realist film, as long as that inscription does not appear to significantly betray the meaning(s) and dimension(s) of those events in the eyes of the original participants. Bystanders in the early forties were not expecting to see a simple documentary rendering of national experience of the sort produced by the DIP; rather, they hoped for the ennoblement of two pinnacles of national cultural expression—Carnival and the *jangadeiros'* *raid*—through conscientious narrativization by a world-revered cinematic storyteller.

Therefore, to shift the historiographical emphasis to the lost text and its contexts is not to deny Orson Welles's subjectivity and agency as director and sociopolitical subject. It is, rather, to recenter the discussion onto the trajectories forming around the work itself, and thereby reread this subjectivity and agency within alternative analytical frameworks. If anything, the legacy of *It's All True* prompts one to agree with Kobena Mercer's assertion that a revised notion of authorship is called for, one that would supplant "romantic notions of creative genius, which always placed the author at the center of the text—resembling the godlike figure of the 'universal intellectual' who thought he had an answer for everything," and provide a historical corrective to the poststructuralist "notion that the author is simply an empty, abstract function of cultural discourse through whom various ideologies speak."⁶⁸ Hence, to merely ignore the "body" (or *sacar el cuerpo*) would not be enough to remedy the historical and methodological oversights of auteur-centrism. Welles's working body and voice in Mexico and Brazil were more than a virtual or symbolic presence. They have persisted indelibly in collective memory, and never ceased to function in tandem with an artistic imagination that conversed with vernacular, popular, and "high" cultural forms circulating throughout the circumatlantic, even at this early stage in Welles's film career.

Keeping in mind the film's ethnographic component, a text-oriented analysis permits greater attention to the series of collaborative relationships with Mexicans and Brazilians that allowed Welles to work effectively in foreign settings. In the next chapters, it will help to expose the aesthetic and thematic tensions and continuities between this project and other works by Welles, as well as with contemporary cinematic representations of social and cultural life in Mexico, Brazil, and parts of the United States. In so doing, it will aid the pursuit of alternate causes for the suspension, calling attention to the documented responses of those in power. To some extent, the notion

of collaboration as the basis of textual construction is rooted in a cross-cultural hermeneutic prompted by the ontological and discursive traits of the work in progress itself, which in textual form, I have argued, would have been neither “readerly” nor “writerly,” but dialogical in its mode of address.⁶⁹ If we begin to see the authorship of *It’s All True* according to a *Wellesian* prerogative in more productively and culturally dialogical terms, then the subjectivities that the spectator might encounter in the film’s diegesis would truly be plural, even if clearly presided over by Welles as conjurer and orchestrator of the text. At the same time, given the pressures and circumstances of the film’s diplomatic mission, it remains important to recover the traces of Welles’s own creative process, as adumbrated in the endotext.

LOVELY, AND SAVVY TOO: WOMEN ARTISTS AND ARTISANS AS GUIDES

The opening of authorial agency onto a collaborative framework, and of causality to a range of factors and protagonists located in the different habituses transected by the film, permits a consideration of the extent to which the auteur-centric criticism on *It’s All True* is at root a gendered, as well as culturally and socially situated, discourse. One should not forget that the individualist construction of author as “genius” within the romantic paradigm contributed significantly to the masculinization of authorial agency prior to the 1970s, provoking the consistent occlusion, if not outright erasure, of feminine participation in creative processes to which national stakes could be attached, including “art” and “A” category commercial cinema. This bias has only recently been reversed with the appearance of revisionist histories, biographies, and the physical retrieval and preservation of neglected films written, directed, and produced by women.⁷⁰ Recovering the instrumental participation of women in *It’s All True* and listening to their testimonies from a woman’s perspective has allowed me to reconstruct key portions of the film text, its broader historical context, and even its cinematic and cultural intertext.

The lack of acknowledgment of women’s contributions to *It’s All True* is more the product of omissions made in contemporary reportage and later auteur-centric accounts than of any noticeable gap within the primary evidence. For example, there is ample evidence that at least two women artists close to Welles—fellow “Good Will” ambassador Genevieve Naylor and Welles’s then-fiancée Dolores del Río—played crucial roles in shaping the episodes shot in Latin America. Del Río (née Dolores Asúnsolo López Negrete), a Mexican-born actress who developed her artistic career in Hollywood beginning in the late twenties, was under contract to RKO Radio studio when Welles arrived in 1939. Although on-screen in Hollywood she was frequently cross-cast in mysterious “European” or, alternately, Mediterranean, roles (in *Journey into Fear*, she plays a French nightclub performer), proud of her Mexican origins, del Río introduced Welles to the Mexican land-

scape, and more specifically to its bullfighting, filmmaking, and artistic circles, long before his decision to adapt the Flaherty story about Bonito for the screen. It was at del Río's home in July 1941 that Welles was introduced to bullfighter "Chucho" Solórzano.⁷¹ As Francisco Madrazo's brother-in-law, Solórzano was instrumental in arranging the location and purchase of bull "performers" for the "Bonito" shoot, in addition to signing on as primary on-screen bullfighter and offscreen adviser. Del Río herself was helpful in facilitating relations with the Mexican film industry (and possibly negotiations with the Mexican government) for the Bonito shoot. At the time, she was being aggressively recruited by that industry to star for the first time in a Mexican feature—a screen adaptation of Mexican author Federico Gamboa's novel *Santa* (1903), to have been directed by Chano Urueta (see fig. 26). There is little question of del Río's influence in the planning for "My Friend Bonito," especially given her travels with Welles to central Mexico to visit La Punta just weeks before the "Bonito" shoot began. Del Río biographer David Ramón has even asserted that if it were not for del Río's imparting her knowledge of the Hollywood film industry and generally providing emotional support to Welles during his first years at RKO (she was eleven years older than Welles), it is questionable whether he would have had the courage to see *Citizen Kane* through to its release.⁷²

After training as an apprentice under Berenice Abbott, Genevieve Naylor had worked as still photographer with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and was one of the first photojournalists hired by the Associated Press.⁷³ In 1940, she traveled with her Russian-born painter husband, Misha Reznikoff, to Brazil to serve as one of the first "Good Will" ambassadors in residence there. Over the next two years, Naylor's unobtrusive camera documented urban and rural working-class life in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Minas Gerais, and the states of Alagoas, Bahia, Pernambuco, and Sergipe in the Northeast, as well as the Amazon delta. The expedition yielded more than 1,300 photographs, a selection of which, in addition to being featured in this book (see figs. 21, 22, and 34, pages 108, 110, and 228), were exhibited in an unprecedented one-woman show, *Faces and Places in Brazil*, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in early 1943.⁷⁴ Like Welles, Naylor had a keen interest in learning about the myriad facets of popular social life in Brazil, including the samba; it was she who took Welles for the first time to see the musicians jamming in Rio's Praça Onze, an out-of-the-way location that Welles almost certainly would never have had access to through official DIP channels. This encounter led to Robert Meltzer's ethnographic exploration of the vernacular urban roots of samba in Rio that was to form the cornerstone of the "Carnaval" episode. Naylor was also stationed in Ouro Preto (in the state of Minas Gerais) during the Easter procession shoot of *It's All True*, as well as in Salvador, Bahia, when Welles and crew traveled there to wrap up the "Jangadeiros" shoot in July 1942. In all probability, Naylor



Figure 26. Dolores del Río as “Esperanza” opposite Pedro Armendáriz in *Flor Silvestre*; director, Emilio “El Indio” Fernández, 1943. Courtesy Filmoteca, Universidad Autónoma de México, Mexico City.

also clued Welles in on the logic and protagonists of local politics and her experiences in coping with DIP surveillance while photographing in Brazil.⁷⁵

The point here is not exactly to initiate a “herstory” of *It’s All True*, substituting the protagonism of women such as del Río and Naylor for that of Welles and his male collaborators. Rather, gender difference is a key rhetorical device in Good Neighbor cinema as well as a symbolic stake in inter-American relations. Whether or not women’s role in society is represented on the screen is also a question that arises in documentary criticism. Thus, a consideration of women’s participation provides a point of departure for a broader understanding of the politics and ethics of Welles’s project. By depicting both men’s and women’s activities in the Fortaleza fishing community, Welles’s images provide the opportunity to gauge their respective roles—and, for many who never fished, to see for the first time how men worked out at sea. Moreover, since bullfighting and *jangada* fishing tend to be far more dangerous professions to engage in than show business, and have traditionally

excluded women from participation, I found myself relying upon widows, nieces, and daughters of the protagonists of *It's All True* for firsthand information. One of my key respondents was Latin America's first woman bullfighter, Conchita Cintrón, who was featured in a bullfighting shoot for "My Friend Bonito," as well as in a Mexican-produced biopic (see fig. 5, page 36). To reflect these contributions, the products of women's labor have provided the main working metaphors for reconstructing the history and text of *It's All True* in this book.

Chapter 4

Almofala

A Wellesian Text

Oh, the Voice! Whoever has heard it remembers it: that tone of pitilessness and tenderness at the same time. An X-ray, like an American God full of love for his country but absolutely just, as gods should be: black-and-white, baroque, biting, caustic.

ORLANDO SENNA, "Tourada Panamericana," 62

The ability to discern within the audiovisual and narrative construction of a film stylistic and thematic elements that not just are meaningful with respect to the plot but also provide reliable indicators of patterns evident in a filmmaker's work as a whole, is a primary axiom of structuralist-based auteur analysis. The cultural benefits of this ability are twofold: it is a sign of the critic's interpretative acuity and insight; and it is taken to reflect the artistic *quality and authenticity (or integrity)* of the work itself. This axiom has thus been easily converted into an evaluative sieve whereby the "wheat"—those filmmakers who are truly "authors" and can assert and transmit their creative vision through the film medium, even when faced with adverse industrial pressures and censorship—can be separated from the "chaff." The latter category includes the majority of industrial film directors who, notwithstanding their evident talent and technical skill, lack a singular creative vision and thus negotiate uneventfully the prerogatives and directives of industry executives. Conversely, a given work by an auteur, whether completed at the "high" or "low" point of his or her career (another romantic trope associated with auteur criticism) is expected to convey at some level of interpretation his or her aesthetic proclivities, political convictions, and moral or existential philosophy despite the prevailing tide of thought and aesthetic sensibility in the social sphere or, more pressingly, reigning industrial standards and expectations. Hence, attention becomes focused on "signature" audiovisual techniques, along with favorite character types and plot situations. These signature traits become rapidly converted into a shorthand of stylistic personality: deep focus, the referencing of off-screen space, and the long take, for example, form the foundation for Welles's "realism" as a director. There is a stabilizing effect on the work by this assignment of patterns to it, which further "guarantees" its quality: no matter what dips or stumbles



Figure 27. Dona Fransquinha makes *almofala* lace in Santa Terezinha, Fortaleza, Brazil, 2003. Photograph by Enrico Rocha.

one encounters along the career trajectory, it is after all, a film by “X.” Although *It’s All True* might be characterized as a “stumble,” few have attempted to link it to Welles as author, the 1993 documentary reconstruction standing as the major exception (see fig. 27).

One fallacy of structuralist auteur analysis occurs when the plastic features and narrative discourse of a given work are expected to readily conform to the checklist of “signature” traits that have been assigned to an author’s work. In the case of *It’s All True*, this can lead to the perception that key “signature” traits are missing: sustained dolly shots are relatively absent, owing to the technical challenges of shooting on location. Innovations and stylistic breakthroughs can thus be conveniently overlooked, echoing the more fundamental criticism that structuralist approaches to social and cultural analysis tend to shy away from, or guard against, the dynamics of change.¹

Upon closer scrutiny, neither of these egocentric tendencies—the placement of structural analysis in the service of individual critical “taste,” and of the author as immutable, fully decipherable subject at the center of textual and historical analysis, habits that are mocked by Welles in his reflexive *F for Fake*—derives from structuralism per se. As Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto has cautioned, one should avoid confusing the method of structuralist analysis with its object. As for the object, it is important to consider the formal and phe-

nominal differences between film and “myth” (the latter being the privileged object of structuralist analysis in the mid-twentieth century) even if, as vehicles of sociocultural discourse, they are observed on occasion to overlap.² As the patterns governing a given auteur’s work become critically exhausted, mythical structures as a target of analysis are displaced from the work onto the *story* of the filmmaker as iconoclast, rather than joined to less visible, yet palpable textual traits that contribute to that iconoclasm. In converting his experience of filmmaking into story material for the screen and the airwaves, Welles can be seen as intervening in the mythology of his own public persona. His documentaries about filmmaking (*F for Fake*, *Filming Othello*, 1978, flanked by *It’s All True* as a first, and *The Other Side of the Wind* as a last, fictional effort inflected by documentary) might have staved off critical conversions of the iconoclasm of his first film, and the makeover of his second, into an unfriendly mythology.³

It’s All True has clearly suffered from both forms of obfuscation: it has been reduced to “nothing but” a myth, leaving its ethnographic representations of ritual and mythological processes in forties Latin America, as well as its substantive contributions to Welles’s artistry, unacknowledged or unexamined. And its foreign content, combined with its unstable and barely developed syntax, has caused it with rare exception to slip through preconceived grids of authorial traits and conduct, especially the now infamous “fear of completion” attributed to Welles. In the absence of recognition for the *nuances* and deeper *logic* of textual difference between this project and Welles’s other early films, critics have missed the degree to which *It’s All True* represents a formative turning point in the young director’s work. This turning point was generated, I argue, by Welles’s studied engagement with documentary and silent film while on location, leading to the adoption of techniques that pointed backward to an earlier, “artisanal” period of experimentation, associated with the transition to mechanically recorded sound or, alternatively, that foreshadowed the turn toward neorealist cinema in the postwar period. In forging genealogical connections between Welles and filmmakers of these earlier and later generations, it immersed him as a young director in a transnational film culture well beyond the confines of studio lots in Hollywood and Culver City.

Rather than hastily abandon a structuralist approach to authorship, I propose, first, that it be pushed and stretched even further to probe the troubled boundary of film and myth, so as to locate the life-sustaining marrow that has been excluded from an ossified schema of authorial traits. The auteurist paradigm can be tilted and rotated such that shifts in style and strategy can be glimpsed and read intertextually along a diachronic axis. In his rigorous application of anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss’s structuralist analysis to film authorship, Peter Wollen has underscored the need to actively pursue discontinuity and change as constitutive aspects of the autho-

rial process: "The great directors must be defined in terms of *shifting relations*, in their singularity as well as their uniformity. Renoir once remarked that a director spends his whole life making one film; this film, which it is the task of the critic to construct, consists not only of the *typical* features of its variants, which are merely its redundancies, but of the *principle of variation* which governs it."⁴

Wollen is careful to qualify that "in [film] practice . . . there will be a kind of *torsion* within the permutation group, within the matrix, a kind of exploration of certain possibilities, in which some antinomies are foregrounded, discarded or even inverted, whereas others remain stable and constant."⁵ As a discontinued project, *It's All True* does not drop out of the principle of variation that holds the corpus together; instead, it is a kind of caesura or punctuation point from which to examine this torsion and detect the move toward what James Naremore has called the "radicalization of style" in Welles's mature film work, that is, a "willingness to challenge not only the habits of the studio system but the limits of popular taste," first manifested in *The Lady from Shanghai* (after a brief detour around *The Stranger* [1946], which Naremore has insightfully likened to a Hitchcockian thriller given its emphasis on the pursuit of the former Nazi culprit and individual character psychology).⁶

Meanwhile, to address the director's protagonism in the historical sphere (independently of the directions taken by his public personae) in both pro- and para-filmic arenas of activity, means stepping into a space that is adjacent to the confines of auteur analysis, narrowly defined,⁷ and trading the Cartesian auteur as the origin of thought (and, concomitantly, the text defined as the "location of thought") for the auteur as narrator, as performer, or, as Welles himself suggested, as "interpreter," caught in the midst of filmmaking as a form of social activity.⁸ These roles are especially explored in the soon-to-be edited and released *The Other Side of the Wind*. Yet there remains a need (especially if one takes Bakhtin's formulation of the utterance and Benjamin's focus on the storyteller's agency into account) for an even stronger grasp of the author in dialogical terms as a sentient and privileged receptor/articulator of the general flow of aesthetic and sociocultural discourse. That is, as the director of *It's All True*, Welles was more than a conventional ethnographic documentarist, or a participant observer.

One of the problems of the myth-based model of authorship is that it presumes total mastery of the author over the language(s) of film and the cultural codes of pro-filmic material—a problem Welles recognized and sought to remedy in the course of making a context-dependent film in cross-cultural circumstances. By scrutinizing the wings, as well as the orchestra pit and stage center (as Welles's camera does at the opera house in *Citizen Kane*) of the film set, one is able to analyze authorship across a series of powerful collaborative relationships (such as Welles had with Gregg Toland, Norman Foster, or José Noriega at RKO and George Fanto in Brazil) and acknowl-

edge the degree to which *It's All True* flourished as a result of dialogue between the filmmaker and other contemporary artists (such as Robert Flaherty, John Fante, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Jesús Solórzano, Grande Othelo, and Herivelto Martins) whose work clearly inspired him. Far from negating the singularity of the author's contribution, collaboration exposes the terms and conditions that give that singularity a broad contextual meaning, while looking beyond the biographical anecdote. Some Wellesian scholars, such as Anderegg, Naremore, and Rosenbaum, have paved the way by locating Wellesian elements in films technically "directed" by others.⁹

The authorial text still resembles a musical composition that is constructed, as Wollen suggests, "*a posteriori*,"¹⁰ but it also needs to be grasped in the act of "performance," bringing the definition of authorship closer to Louis Armstrong's description of the swing musician, who unwittingly contributed to the popularization of jazz music in the twenties yet continued to perform in such a way as to deflect the depersonalization and "blind" repetition that commercialization encouraged:

There are millions of people who don't like or do not yet understand American jazz music. . . . They would rather hear some "sweet" band play, the kind all "hot" musicians call "corney." I don't know why it is. . . . I do know that a musician who plays in "sweet" orchestras must be like a writer who writes stories for some popular magazines. He has to follow along the same kind of line all the time, and write *what he thinks the readers want* just because they're used to it. . . . Any average player, if he's worth anything at all, can follow through a score, as it's written there in front of him on his instrument rack. But it takes a swing player, a real good one, *to be able to leave that score* and to know, or "feel," just when to leave it and when to get back on it. No conductor can tell him, because it all happens in a second and doesn't happen the same way any two times running. It is just that liberty that every individual player must have in a real swing orchestra that makes it most worth listening to.¹¹

Reading this passage, it is not difficult to see why Orson Welles held such a deep admiration for Louis Armstrong, or why he made it a priority to adapt Armstrong's trajectory as a "hot" jazz musician for the screen at a time when "sweet" swing jazz was reaching its peak of commercial success in the United States. It is uncanny how Armstrong's description of the "sweet" as opposed to the "hot" musician resembles the contrast between the mercenary (or contractual) director and the author in auteur criticism, who, willing to break certain rules and not primarily obsessed with audience tastes, is capable of eye- and ear-opening, thought-provoking artistry in an industrial medium. Although in practice Welles's directorial style approximated Duke Ellington's orchestrator/ensemble style more than Armstrong's multiple solo format, Armstrong affirms in this text the possibility for individual expression, and indeed authorship, together with a departure from a "script" (or score) with-

out compromising the group dynamic. In a similar vein, the authorial bridge I am constructing to the *exotext* of *It's All True* calls forth the creative relationships Welles maintained with collaborators and precursors who helped to give shape and direction to the film, thereby ensuring historical accuracy and cultural sensitivity in foreign settings while keeping Welles's counter-productive impulses at bay, so that he could "go to town."¹² To make *It's All True*, Welles had to work simultaneously as composer/conductor and as a player in a new kind of band, while familiarizing himself with the techniques of his "ancestors."¹³ Paradoxically, it is the departures from what even Welles himself had planned, formulated in an inspired response to the place and moment of shooting, that allow us to see the deeper connective creative threads between *It's All True* and his other works, and make the film something "worth contemplating."

LOCATING THE AUTHORIAL DISCOURSE WITHIN *IT'S ALL TRUE*

Given the creative significance of the editing process for Orson Welles, the absence within the work in progress of syntactic articulations made by the director during the editing process has caused the threads of *It's All True's* filiation to Welles's broader oeuvre to be overlooked, a situation that is somewhat exacerbated by the edits and assemblages of the footage that have been made by others since 1942, motivated by other concerns and designed for different audiences. The task is also complicated by Welles's improvisational approach to much of the location shooting in Mexico and Brazil, which has tended to widen the gap between written blueprints and what was actually shot. Finally, the threads of filiation are further foreshortened when comparing the film (superficially, and often without having seen it) exclusively to Welles's other early films at RKO, precluding identification of its productive links to works he directed in the postwar period.

In addition to these pragmatic challenges, there are a few conceptual stumbling blocks. For many critics, questions regarding authorship might be raised by the strong documentary component in *It's All True* (in contrast to most of his work at Hollywood studios), as well as the film's cosponsorship by the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA). Do the criteria (or the basis) for authorship differ in the case of documentary compared with fictional modes of representation? The work of Robert Flaherty, Jean-Luc Godard, and Frederick Wiseman suggests that they might not, while the films of Eduardo Coutinho (Brazil) and Lourdes Portillo (United States) suggest that they do. This is not an idle question, since the value assigned to cinema as an art form, and hence as the product of an individual author's imagination and talent, has tended to be inversely proportional to its capacity for reproducing or resembling the physical world (a value at the core of documentary as it has been traditionally conceived).¹⁴ Yet in Welles's case, this is

a misleading question, not only because in general film (and narrative) practice the documentary/fiction dichotomy is not as strict as is commonly construed,¹⁵ but because of the grounding of Welles's storytelling in the historical sphere, together with his incorporation of documentary, theatrical, and atmospheric techniques into his cinematic poetics.

As Bill Nichols has observed, "Individual filmmakers do display different styles in a manner similar to fiction film directors and these differences define different perspectives on the world, but realist style in documentary also grounds the text in the historical world. It is a mark of authenticity, testifying to the camera, and hence the filmmaker, having 'been there,' and thus providing warrant for our own "being there," viewing the historical world through *the transparent amber of indexical images and realist style*."¹⁶

With respect to this double function of realism in *It's All True*, the unedited, unsutured condition of the footage opens up two lines of deep structural investigation; first, it converts the work in progress into a laboratory for ethnohistorical observation, the narrative and performative threads of which transect the pro-filmic world of *It's All True*, yet proceed almost independently of any authorial "scoring" or agency.¹⁷ On the other hand, the orally transmitted, written, and photographic evidence allows for a more free-ranging exploration than usual of the *poetic* possibilities of the image within and across film frames, foregrounding what some critics have identified as being at the heart of Welles's creative impulse in cinema, as contrasted with the prose-driven tendencies of directors more closely aligned with the bulk of studio product (which emphasizes story-centered creation along the diachronic axis). As François Truffaut put it, "Orson Welles is a poet *in spite of himself*, a poet who would like to be a prosateur."¹⁸

A second question impinging upon author-oriented analysis is whether the constraints and expectations imposed by the state on a director operate with the same timing and intensity with regard to the filmmaking process as those tacitly or forcefully introduced by the film industry. Indeed, after Welles's experiences with the Federal Theatre Project under the Roosevelt administration in the thirties, *It's All True* was the only major project to have obtained support and required the approval by state agencies prior to and during production. Here it is a question of how limits on content or expectations as to its stylistic delivery might affect the rendering of pro-filmic events in the authorial text; or as to how the sudden withdrawal of support, as occurred with the 1937 staging of *The Cradle Will Rock*, might have led to new strategies of production and argumentation. Although Welles was generally sympathetic to, and favorably treated by, the policies of U.S. state cultural agencies during World War II, as he had been during the thirties—a sympathy that is evident in the overall design and ideological orientation of the film—the project can in no way be reduced to a simple vehicle for state prop-

agenda. This difference and the tensions it generated not only provide important text-based clues to the benign neglect shown by the OCIAA toward the project after 1942 but also, rooted in Welles's interpretation of his mission *independently* of state dictates, North and South, and grasped within the heat of his improvisations, bring us closer to his positioning as the project's author.

Regardless of how one begins to answer these questions (and, to be rigorous, there is no single, "correct" answer to either of them), a series of stylistic "traces" and thematic concerns can be detected within the work in progress of *It's All True*, which, if singled out and pulled back and forth across the endotext—like the threads attached to the dowels of *almofala* lacework (see figure 27)—help to anchor the various episodes within a Wellesian framework of interpretation. Because this exercise is carried out not in relation to a completed film work but as part of the task of reconstruction already begun, the authorial discourse it adumbrates can be seen as forming a bridge between the *endotext*, which it directly informs and helps to bind together, and the *exotext*, which it injects with the requisite tension and nodes of friction that help differentiate the project from its surrounding intertext. Some of the thematic "meridians" (or "bundles," to use the Lévi-Straussian term), such as the dynamic relation between silent/sound and documentary/fiction film, were tailored to fit the immediate political objectives and technical conditions of *It's All True* as a diplomatic project. Even so, they point to the long-term impact of the project on Welles's authorial vision as expressed in his later work as both independent filmmaker and unprofessed film critic. One finds these transdiscursive meridians resurfacing in Welles's open experimentations with postrecorded and postsynchronized sound (*Journey into Fear*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Mr. Arkadin*) and in his recurrent use of the "essay format" to reexamine his own career, the places visited during his self-imposed exile, and the life and work of other artists (the BBC *Orson Welles' Sketchbook* series; *Around the World with Orson Welles: Paris after Dark*, 1955; *Portrait of Gina*, 1958; *F for Fake*; *Filming Othello*). Other meridians follow from Welles's early work in the unfinished *Heart of Darkness*, *Citizen Kane*, and *Magnificent Ambersons* to inform the construction of *It's All True* with unusual politico-aesthetic results.

READING AT THE MICROLEVEL: SIGNS OF WELLES'S SCORING

A close, shot-by-shot and sequence-by-sequence examination of the nitrate footage in the UCLA vaults provides insight into how Welles's strategies during shooting left traces of authorial "scoring," allowing for the unfolding of ethnographic events as part of an emic, transcinematic process (i.e., events that have been absorbed into the film's diegesis yet can easily exist inde-

pendently of it). The historical directions taken by these events for the film's protagonists are discussed in the conclusion and in appendix 1. These traces take us beyond the manipulation of pro-filmic elements and "enframed" images, which Tom Gunning has cited as two key components of the filmic narrator system, into an anticipation of editing, the third key component.¹⁹

Shot Duration as Part of Découpage

In the black-and-white footage for both "My Friend Bonito" and "Jangadeiros," each take is timed very close to the pro-filmic flow of action, leaving very little to be trimmed at either end during the editing process. Richard Wilson remarked to me during our logging of the footage in 1989 that this "tight" timing was customary for Welles, who tended to be very economical in his use of film stock. The same does not quite hold, of course, for the documentary portions of the "Carnaval" episode, since most of the action was not deliberately staged, or even posed, for the camera (although the revelers do acknowledge the camera's presence with a glance, a smile, or a salute). In Rio, both crews tried to achieve maximum coverage of the festivities on location, taking as their camera cue the natural flow and direction of the events they happened to encounter.

Mise-en-Scène

Even more striking are the differences in rationale behind the various takes of scenes in the different episodes. In the initial rushes for "Bonito," for example, which were directed by Norman Foster, we see changes in camera setup to shoot the scene in greater or lesser proximity or from a different angle, or, as is more often the case, to elicit more photogenic results from the action between Chico and the bull, who of course, is responding to environmental stimuli rather than performing "on cue." By contrast, in the "Jangadeiros" footage, we see a progression in the multiple takes from simplicity to complexity of action before the camera, often using the same setups. This growing complexity is a function of the increasing number of people placed by Welles in the shot, or the result of Welles changing their lines of action so that our visual attention is continually redirected to different portions of the frame, often torn, as it is in *Citizen Kane* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*, between foreground and background. Apart from the two versions shot of "Bringing the News" of the *jangada* accident at two separate locations (Mucuripe Beach, in Fortaleza, and Itapoã Beach near Salvador, Bahia), along with "multipurpose" shots such as low-angle medium shots of people waving, quite possibly in anticipation of decisions that would have to be made at the editing table (see fig. 13, page 64), there is not a lot of coverage beyond what was necessary to obtain the key action.

Moreover, as the production correspondence of "My Friend Bonito" indicates, Welles was not content to leave the composition and sequence of shots entirely up to Crosby and Foster. Instead, we see him congratulating Foster specifically on having brought the camera in low and close to the branding of Bonito, so that, as in *Citizen Kane* (the paperweight at Kane's deathbed, the medicine glass next to Susan's sickbed, the lightbulb on the opera stage, the cockatoo in the Xanadu corridor, etc.) the framing begins centered on the object in close-up, only to pull back, pan, tilt, or splice to reveal related human actions in the same scene. Like these objects, the branding irons take on an oppressive significance given the claustrophobic impression created by the camera setup, close-ups, and choreography. This is entirely appropriate to the rite of passage that is taking place: Bonito no longer "belongs" to Chico; instead, with his flesh claimed by the hacienda owner, he will pursue the course that the tradition and the socioeconomics of bullfighting have set out for him. As mentioned, the use of close-ups in two- and three-shots, along with choker close-ups in "Jangadeiros" (the "Funeral"), recalls similar compositions in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *The Lady from Shanghai*, and *Touch of Evil*, sparking social commentary and an inquisitive (or, alternately, skeptical), rather than adulatory stance toward the individual characters.

Other elements of mise-en-scène that are indicative of the author's touch include the oblique positioning of actors in relation to the camera, facing upward or downward (we actually see Welles's hand in the frame adjusting the face of the little girl who discovers Sobrinho's body in one of the "Jangadeiros" rushes), the low-angled framing of the crosses in the cemetery atop the barren Proapa dune in "Jangadeiros," which are echoed by the crosses against a desolate horizon in *Macbeth*, and the previously mentioned uses of the "trope of impeded passage." The latter is present in the first version of "Bringing the News" (Francisca must make her way to the front of the group to speak to the three surviving *jangadeiros*), contrasted with the more classical rendering of this scene that appears in the 1993 documentary reconstruction; in the "nets" sequence of "Finding the Body"; and in the "Blessing of the Animals" scene of "My Friend Bonito," where the priest must make his way through a throng of younger children in order to reach Chico and Bonito in the cart. These choreographies are echoed in later films, and they create a combustible combination of density and tension within the frame that adds dramatic emphasis: what terrible truth are the *jangadeiros*, hats in hands, bringing to Francisca? Will news of Sobrinho's body reach Francisca in time for the body to be retrieved from the tidewaters and given a proper burial, returning him (alias Jacaré) to the community? Will the priest treat the yearling Bonito and his human companion with respect and consideration so that Bonito can rightfully join the ranks of "God's creatures"?

From Découpage to Montage

In response to Welles's complaints, one of the solutions that Foster found to the pastoral, even-keeled, middle-ground tableaux Crosby was creating in "My Friend Bonito" was not only to position the camera closer to the ground and to tilt it so that the frame would be filled mostly with sky, reminiscent of Flaherty's cinematography and repeated in the voyage scenes of "Jangadeiros," but also to create dramatic contrasts (with Alex Phillips's help) by breaking up the shots into low- versus high-angled compositions. In this way, Foster introduced a dynamism in the portrayals of rural Mexican life, while inscribing a reminder of power differentials, for example, between mestizo village boy and hacienda owner (in the "Chico Petitions Don Luis" scene) and young rural parishioners and middle-aged Catholic priest (in the "Blessing of the Animals" scene). This prefiguration of montage in the rushes, which resonates with analogous and similar alternating setups in *Citizen Kane*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *The Lady from Shanghai*, and *Othello*, is easily traceable to Eisenstein's work in the twenties. Thus, the detection of authorial scoring can also lead to the genealogical links that are activated in the application of visual style to specific dramatic situations and types of subject matter. Like Welles's adaptations of Shakespeare, his dialogical approach to borrowing these stylistic tropes reveals his agency in generating new interpretations through their deployment in new cinematic, narrative, and cultural contexts—in much the same way that the new waves of Latin American filmmakers have responded to foreign sources of cinematic influence.

These examples of "scoring" by Welles, which support rather than offset the artistic and symbolic importance he gave to editing, find their affirmation in the two surviving examples of how shots and shot sequences might have been joined to form an integral scene. First, in the rough assembly of nitrate footage (black-and-white positive) depicting the reenacted entry of the *São Pedro* into Guanabara Bay, a progressive complexity in composition is visible not just in the various angles shot of the same action but in the sequence of shots making up the "scene" that builds from the simple one-on-one contrast of the *jangada* with other types of craft, ranging alternately from sailboats to tugboats to Portuguese-style fishing boats, culminating in the interweaving of action involving these various types of craft along different vectors, with the *jangada* at the epicenter. Similarly, in the draft continuity of the final bullfighting sequence of "My Friend Bonito," Noriega creates a series of long, medium, and medium-close shot-reverse-shots of the "sunny" (*porra*) and "shady" (*contra-porra*) sides of the bullfighting arena (public to public), then adds another layer by choreographing the interaction of the individual bullfighters with the public, aligning Silverio Pérez with the "shade" and Chucho Solórzano with the "sun" (extreme long, long, and full shots), so as to underscore the socioeconomic contrasts that are spatially and



Figure 28. Triumphant Silverio Pérez with Fermín “Armillita” Espinosa and Pedro Velásquez in the Plaza El Toreo, Mexico City, early 1940s. Photograph by A. Reynoso. Courtesy Madrazo Family Archive. Metaphotograph by the author.

performatively present; these oppositions are then neutralized through the introduction of the bull that challenges and resists but does not attack Solórzano, attracting the acclaim of all sides of the arena.²⁰ It remains to be seen how the deeper strands of the film’s themes might be interwoven with the work of stylistic contrast and synthesis evident in the footage (see fig. 28).

THE TENUOUS BOUNDARY BETWEEN DOCUMENTARY AND FICTION FILM

Throughout the endotext, “documentary” and “fiction” work as two modes of representation that guide the narration and stylistic design of the episodes, North and South. The centrality of the tension between these modes is most obviously expressed in the film’s title, *It’s All True*, which Welles retained for the project from mid-1941, through its shifts in sponsorship, to his own efforts to salvage it in 1943. When one reads beyond the realist approach to representing the story of Bonito in Mexico to examine the construction of the Brazilian episodes of the film, the integration of documentary with fic-

tional events readily appears as more than a strategy for improving inter-American representation; it is a means of expanding the director's creative latitude. It is intended to provide the requisite measure of cultural and social authenticity while narrating events and transmitting cultural information in an entertaining way. As such, this tension feeds into the general problematic of realism and Orson Welles's fascination with the "truth effect" of film. The fictionalization of documentary "facts" and the inscription of documentary material in a fictional narrative framework (taking the form of recognizable film genres) are at the root of the original "North American" conception for the project (thinking back to the Landru and Huey Long stories) and can be found repeatedly in Welles's film work as a whole. Welles explores the border zones of narration and mimetic representation in *Citizen Kane*, *Mr. Arkadin*, *F for Fake*, and *Filming Othello*. Indeed, Jonathan Rosenbaum has sketched the analytical problems associated with dividing Welles's film work at the macrolevel into "fiction" and "nonfiction," while at the same time sorting it according to the narrative strategies of "stories" versus "essays." When these two approaches are combined, what is conventionally conceived of as fiction film is bound to collide with documentary.²¹ (In his article, Rosenbaum classifies *It's All True* as a "nonfiction" or "essay" film.)²²

As a working concept for *It's All True*, the blurring of the boundary between documentary and fiction is expressed in a multitude of strategies, ranging from the choice of source material (the experiences of Robert Flaherty, John Fante's parents, and Louis Armstrong while they were still in their youth) and the use of nonprofessional actors at actual locations ("The Story of Jazz," "My Friend Bonito," "Jangadeiros," "Carnaval"), to the use of news reports and testimonies as the basis for narration ("My Friend Bonito," "Jangadeiros"), the spontaneous documentation of unstaged events and customary rituals (the "Blessing of the Animals" and actual bullfights and *tiendas* in Mexico, Carnival celebrations in the streets and clubs of Rio, fishing and the daily work of women in the *jangadeiro* community), and the explicitly didactic presentation of the ethnographic "facts" ("Jangadeiros," "Carnaval"). All were to be woven into an "open" (discursively porous) diegesis within the (as it currently appears) loosely articulated "macro" structure of the film. Beyond the syntactical grafting of "straightforward" documentary material onto the plot structure of each episode, one finds the infiltration of documentary as a principle of construction in staged material, such as the staged visits to churches and a Bahian fishing village during the reenactment of the *jangadeiros'* voyage, or the details that were worked into the "Carnaval" sets at Cinédia Studio (even if they would never be captured on film), thanks to the recommendations of Herivelto Martins.

Conversely, the scripting of the episodes mostly by writers other than the original sources (see appendix 2) and the primary reliance on studio techniques, from the conventional to the experimental (in two out of three

episodes, it was, after all, an RKO crew), meant that the episodes approximated Kracauer's notion of "slight narrative," as against a strictly mimetic approach to historical narration, shot through with stylistic transparency. Narrativization took two forms: the infusion of drama into events as they are staged before the camera in their actual settings ("My Friend Bonito," "Carnaval," "Jangadeiros," "The Story of Jazz," "Love Story"). As in many of Flaherty's films, such as *Nanook of the North* and *Man of Aran*, and regardless of the degree of fictionalization in each episode, an organic bond was to be maintained between the screen version and the original locations and events by way of consultation of, and collaboration with, the "real-life" protagonists and members of their communities. For example, Leonard Feather, Louis Armstrong's most dedicated critic and public supporter, was called in by Elliot Paul to advise on "The Story of Jazz," and Chucho Solórzano instructed on the art of bullfighting during the scripting of "Bonito."²³

In conceptual terms, this tension between "documentary" and "fiction"—for neither component can ultimately be seen in *It's All True* as undermining or overdetermining the other; rather, they are *relational* terms—can be mapped along three axes of semantic interpretation. The first two axes are anchored in the ambiguity implicit in the film's title, which can be taken at face value as a "warranty" of the ultimate veracity of the stories, despite the incredible feats and scenes the spectator is invited to witness: it is *all true*, which is how the film's narration begins. Or it can be seen as a slightly coy, hyperbolic statement that points to the impossibility of representing total truth or "unadulterated reality" in any film, no matter how earnest the filmmaker's effort or reliable the source of the story: *some, but not all*, of it is true (or, as Rogério Sganzerla put it in his own film title, *Nem Tudo É Verdade, Not All of It Is True*). The latter proposition is supported, for example, by Welles's revelation of Jacaré's death at the planned ending of the film. Both propositions can be discerned in rhetorical statements Welles made about his own filmmaking experiences (the "Voodoo" program of the *Orson Welles' Sketchbook* series, *F for Fake*, and *Filming Othello*); moreover, each is integrally tied to what can be extrapolated as his own ontological definition of cinematic representation. (Thus, Welles complicates and inverts the logic of Flaherty's implausible disavowal in *The Captain's Chair*: "The characters in this book are entirely imaginary, and have no relation to any given person,"²⁴ notwithstanding Flaherty's heavy reliance—for the sake of realism—on firsthand geographic and ethnographic information gathered during his youthful expeditions.)

The second proposition revolves around the notion that given the unavoidable difference between the filmic representation and the object or event portrayed, a kind of "complicit mendacity" (Welles's version of cinematic suture, if you will) is necessary between filmmaker and viewer for the

representation to be viable as a spectacle. Conversely, “truth” is also what one takes to be true as long as someone else is convinced of it as such; yet there must also be at least a *partial* element of verifiable truth for the fiction to be believable. This dynamic is very much linked to Welles’s work with prestidigitation, on-screen and offscreen, and it is a structuring principle of one of his last films, *F for Fake*.²⁵ The first proposition involves a kind of double inversion of the “suspension of disbelief” that underlies the second, and it is expressed both in Welles’s tendency toward self-reflexivity in his works and in the attention to the incidence of storytelling in *It’s All True*. As Walter Benjamin reminds us in his essay “The Storyteller,” storytelling requires one to be as faithful in the transmission of the experience of the events as possible, combined with the knowledge that in the very act of retelling, that experience will undergo slight alterations, often beginning with the effects of the storyteller’s own experience, which seeps in.²⁶ Each new telling brings a distancing from the original event that is the referent of the “first story,” whether it is Fante’s narration of his parents’ courtship or Jacaré’s narration of the voyage in his diary. In the end, however, it is enough to know that all of these versions, including the cinematic version that makes it onto the screen, are grounded in a past, if not present, reality. This sense of “truth,” which is consonant, again, with Kracauer’s notion of “slight narrative,” is conveyed in Welles’s opening narration in one of the later script versions for the four-part film: “The Film you are about to see is called ‘It’s All True,’ because these stories really happened.”²⁷

As a result, in *It’s All True*, authenticity and verisimilitude are defined less in terms of the transparency of the cinematic signifier in relation to the filmed object than as a tacit agreement between filmmaker (as narrator) and spectator to accept the events portrayed as being ultimately grounded in the real, regardless of the necessary artifice in representation. (Given the mandate of international distribution for the film, the Latin American spectator, the Brazilian and Mexican spectator in particular, is the one who must be “convinced” of this grounding, which, according to Welles and entourage, could not be “faked.”) In practice, this “pact” regarding the approximation of the real as the basis for cross-cultural communication involved, on one hand, a great attention to detail (to ensure plausibility) and, on the other, a measure of reflexivity (as in the destruction of the boundary between proscenium and audience in “Carnaval” or Welles’s reference to Jacaré’s death in “Jangadeiros”) in which the para-filmic realm of experience is actually or rhetorically brought into the zone of the pro-filmic.

The third axis of interpretation builds on the first two, and it stems from the epistemological premise developed through the documentary-fiction relation in *It’s All True* that the cinema is, like the narration of history, above all a “discursive enterprise.” Welles implements in the construction of the film what Hayden White describes as the representational trajectory char-

acteristic of the historiographical enterprise: "A discourse moves 'to and fro' between received encodings of experience and the clutter of 'reality,' 'truth,' or 'possibility.' It also moves 'back and forth' (like a shuttle?) between alternative ways of encoding this reality, some of which may be provided by the traditions of discourse prevailing in a given domain of inquiry and others of which may be idiolects of the author, the authority of which he is seeking to establish."²⁸

One might paraphrase the last sentence as the "traditions of discourse" pervading the Hollywood industry in its representation of Latin America, and the "idiolects" sought and developed by Welles on location, the "authority of which he [was] seeking to establish." Such discursivity is implied in the four-part structure of the film in that it provides us with alternate cinematic approaches of encoding past and present reality, and different types or orders of mediation between historical experience and narrative representation: the *jangadeiros'* voyage is a "found story";²⁹ much of the staged material in "Carnaval" could be termed "slight narrative"; whereas "My Friend Bonito" is a popular legend substantiated by documentary scenes selected and staged in the present. Through the four-part structure, it is also possible to observe the various modes of generic enunciation (epic versus tragedy versus the musical interweaving of sociospatial territories) according to which Latin American history and culture have been reworked for the screen. Finally, the formal acknowledgment of discursivity in the film points to the ways in which cinematic fictions are sociopolitically positioned and oriented (in this case, by Welles's interpretation of the Good Neighbor Policy) and, to follow up on the second axis of interpretation, to the ways in which storytelling on film can be used as a means of transmitting personal and social memory.

In rendering these tensions, Welles introduces the theme of the confrontation with human death (and, metonymically, the death of cultural practices) as a site for locating the "truth" and rebuilding a sense of community and identity. In "My Friend Bonito," this theme is absorbed and fully encoded as an object for contemplation (and as a cathartic element, which creates dramatic suspense) within the diegesis, whereas in "Jangadeiros," the use of a dummy in the burial hammock in place of Sobrinho—who is acting in place of the lost Jacaré—serves as a potent source of allegory for the participant and as a reflexive device for the spectator, undermining for both parties the possibility for seamlessness in the screen illusion. The inclusion of a shot from the perceptual point of view of the dead Sobrinho/Jacaré in the funeral scene, mentioned earlier, works to reinforce this reflexivity: Such a shot not only is uncanny from the standpoint of viewer-subject identification but is phenomenally impossible. Roland Barthes has suggested, in reference to a similar shot in Carl Theodor Dreyer's *Vampyr* (1932) that, even when consistent with generic situations—such as a corpse that is about to return to

life in a horror film—such a shot also transgresses the limits of the Law, broadly defined: “[S]uch is the extreme limit at which representation is outplayed; the spectator can no longer take up any position, for he cannot identify his eye with the closed eyes of the dead man; the tableau has no point of departure, no support, it gapes open. Everything that goes on *before* this limit is reached . . . can only be legal.”³⁰

In the case of *The Magnificent Ambersons*, the transgression of the conventional boundaries of representation when the perceptual point of view is aligned with the coffin at the wake of George Amberson Minafer’s father works to call into question the patriarchal order embodied by the absent Mr. Minafer: the ensuing drama involves a struggle among Ambersonian matriarchy (Isabelle and Aunt Fanny), a modern version of patriarchy that logically follows from Minafer’s death—the latter’s replacement by Eugene Morgan as a suitable spouse for Isabelle, and a return to a patrician form of patriarchy championed by the Oedipally fixated Georgie. In “Jangadeiros,” the establishment of a “nonexistent” vantage point from Sobrinho’s grave to the mourners atop Proapa dune serves as a reminder of the unnaturalness of the young fisherman’s death according to the logic of generational succession, while referencing the ongoing mystery of Jacaré’s actual disappearance and potentially provoking reflection on the equally inaccessible social institutions that, with the right measure of geosocial justice, could mitigate against the effects of such a death on the community. In the first case, “lawlessness” equals the aftermath of patriarchal death, in the second, “lawlessness” equals the fisherman’s grave; in both cases, a synecdochal relation is established between the missing character and the sociocultural order.

CINEMA AND MODERNIZATION: OPENING THE THRESHOLD BETWEEN SILENT AND SOUND FILM

At the time *It’s All True* was produced, the technological capacity for recording direct sound on location, and therefore for flawlessly joining synchronized sound to documentary images, remained to be fully developed. (The crudeness of synchronizing dialogue with images shot on location is evident in *Housing Problems* [1935], directed by Arthur Elton and Edgar Anstey for the British Gas Association). At best, footage shot MOS in 16mm on location could be edited to roughly match the geotemporal unfolding of actual wartime events and then consolidated by way of a voice-over narration joined to wild sound recorded on location, as in John Ford’s award-winning World War II documentary, *The Battle of Midway* (1942). These technological limitations (exacerbated in the case of “Jangadeiros,” since RKO did not permit Welles to use either its cameras or its variable-area sound-recording truck for the northeastern locations) meant that most of the Latin American material had to be shot MOS and would eventually survive without the sound

track that had been planned for recording upon Welles's return to the studio. Nevertheless, the rudimentary circumstances provided ample opportunity for Welles to experiment with the sound-image relation and alternative modes of narration, as he had in *Citizen Kane* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*, especially in his plans for using voice-over, and to stretch his own limits in the direction of actors' performances without relying on dialogue.

When one considers the developmental arc of the film in terms of salient themes and settings, as well as Welles's sources of cinematic inspiration, however, there are signs that he was doing much more than making the "best out of a bad situation." Had he been able to choose his era of film history, Welles might have enjoyed being involved in sound experiments during the early years of the New Deal, as were Rouben Mamoulian, King Vidor, and, in France, René Clair. At that time, the Production Code (with its climate of regulation and substantive restrictions) was not yet quite in place—nor the industrial codification of the uses of camera vocabulary and editing syntax, along with the aesthetics of mixing dialogue, effects, and music in synchronized relation to the visual track. Against the broader thematic backdrop of *It's All True*, the transition to sound might represent the entry of the cinema into its own form of modernity together with its strong attachment to the consolidation of the nation-state. From this perspective, it is ironic that the North American episodes were set to begin, like *The Magnificent Ambersons*, shortly after the turn of the century while they were to have been shot on modern soundstages (with the exception of "Bonito"), whereas the Latin American episodes, set in contemporary times, were mostly shot with methods that dated from the "premodern" era of the cinema. Even more ironic is the strong interest in silent techniques by a director who is best remembered by his contemporaries for the use of his voice and innovations in sound mixing.

The early realist style detected in the shot episodes of *It's All True* may be partially attributed to Welles's direct contact with members of the early twentieth-century generation of filmmakers, such as Charles Chaplin, Jean Renoir, King Vidor, Joris Ivens, and Robert Flaherty. Beyond this, the strategically necessary return to silent methods of direction and construction permitted the reintroduction of artisanal methods into what had already become a high-modernist and mass art form. The return to these methods had special implications in the Latin American cultural context, where uneven industrialization and lack of access to the latest sound and camera technology, not to mention laboratory processes (the Technicolor rushes had to be sent to Argentina to confirm the quality of the color coverage of "Carnaval"), contributed to the concurrent use of various types of film technology.³¹ Welles's pursuit of silent aesthetics in "Jangadeiros" and his tendency in "Carnaval," following the work of Vidor in the early sound era (notably in *Hallelujah!* [1929]), to let the sound track dictate the tone of performance and antici-

pated sequencing of material on the visual track happened to intersect with a debate over the artistic virtues of silent versus sound cinema that was resurfacing in Brazil during Welles's visit. This debate was reignited by a group of Brazilian critics known as the "Chaplin Club" in the wake of strong competition facing the national cinema from both Argentine and Hollywood product. Reports of this debate in the contemporary Brazilian film press cite Welles as an active participant. He is quoted by Vinicius de Moraes (himself a strong advocate of silent film aesthetics) as offering a diplomatic yet sincere response to the question of which mode of expression is most suited to film as an art form. Rather than boldly state his preference for one mode of filmmaking over another, Welles compared silent and sound cinema to the use of oil as opposed to watercolors in painting: they are unquestionably different, but each can be used to equivalent artistic advantage.³²

Nonetheless, years later, Brazilian film critic Paulo Emilio Salles Gomes would claim that the release in Brazil of Welles's *Citizen Kane* helped those who were still adhering to silent film aesthetics in the early forties to "break the contradiction between ideas and sentiments that [they] were experiencing, and allow[ed them] to appreciate without misgivings the sound cinema, to accept it without reservations as to style."³³ Salles Gomes ventures further, beyond the realm of the silent/sound dichotomy, to stress Welles's *innovations* within the field of sound film aesthetics. Citing the pivotal scenes in Charles Foster Kane's affective life, where a lightbulb blinks in close-up as Susan Alexander's voice falters on the stage of the Chicago opera house, and the image of the abandoned sled in the Colorado snow that is joined to a train whistle, Salles Gomes argues that such scenes "demonstrate the correctness of Soviet filmmaker Pudovkin's theory that image and sound can only be merged when [their content] doesn't coincide. An image-sound [as a conjunction] can only emerge from the asynchronic conflict between image and sound. In *Citizen Kane*, Orson Welles treads timidly down that path. Yet Welles, with his cinematic instinct, *couldn't have avoided sensing the extraordinary fruitfulness of the possibilities of such a path*."³⁴ Indeed, although the details are not always spelled out in the treatments and script notes, *It's All True* appears to be rife with experimentation with the creative possibilities of sound and image working both separately and in expressive combination.

On the other hand, the stylistic impact of Sergei Eisenstein's sojourn in the early thirties was still noticeable in Mexican cinematography of the early forties, even though the Mexican film industry was then entering its Golden Age with a panoply of Hollywood-inspired genre films, the popularity of which was driven by colloquial dialogue, humor, and regional musical performance on the sound track. Moreover, it is worth noting that the experimentation with sound together with recourse to silent techniques was not foreign to Welles's and Foster's Mexican technical crew. For example, around the time of the "Bonito" shoot, Alex Phillips was in the midst of developing

his own signature realist cinematography in Mexican sound cinema, as evidenced in the *comedia ranchera* (rural comedy) *Ay Jalisco, ¡No te Rajes!* and in other films of the Mexican Golden Age. He was also the cinematographer on some of the earliest sound features shot on Mexican soil, such as Arkady Boytler's *La Mujer del Puerto* (*Woman of the Port*, 1933) and *El Compadre Mendoza* (dir. Fernando de Fuentes, 1934), in addition to *Santa* (dir. Antonio Moreno) the making of which in 1931, according to Emilio García Riera, marked the inauguration of the Mexican film industry.³⁵ In *El Compadre Mendoza*, one already notes the expressive use of offscreen sound and the muting of on-screen dialogue to establish point of view and create dramatic suspense.

Finally, there is the more abstract (yet phenomenally grounded) relationship of the silent/sound debate to Welles's film oeuvre, in his alternate reliance upon his own body and voice as vehicles for dramatic and narrative enunciation. In *It's All True*, where he was to make himself heard, but rarely seen within the frame, this dilemma was unintentionally extended to the representation of his Latin American protagonists: with plans to have Othello's, Jerônimo's, Sobrinho's, Francisca's, Chico's, and Miguel's dialogue recorded in Hollywood indefinitely suspended, they remain voiceless in the surviving footage.

THE PROMISE OF MODERNITY AND THE CRISIS OF MODERNIZATION (FOR POPULAR SECTORS IN THE AMERICAS)

*George Amberson Minafer walked homeward slowly through what seemed to be the strange streets of a strange city . . . for the town was growing . . . and changing. It was heaving up in the middle incredibly. . . . It was spreading incredibly. And as it heaved and spread . . . it befouled itself and darkened its sky.*³⁶

For Welles, modernity is often associated with melancholy, which might explain his fascination with silent film techniques and the imperfect synchronization of dialogue and image in some of his films, and is effectively expressed in scenes such as George Minafer's conversation with his uncle Jack about his mother's relationship to the all-too-modern automobile inventor Eugene Morgan, where their words are drowned out by the groaning and screeching of rusty bathtub pipes, itself an emblem of modern sound effects and editing techniques. At the same time, modernity was undoubtedly a paramount stake for popular mobilizations, such as the *jangadeiros'* voyage, and national development across the hemisphere during World War II. A crucial bundle of questions at the root of the Good Neighbor Policy involved determining just *how much* modernization in Latin America was necessary and desirable to permit the achievement of democracy and favorable trade relations; how the United States could become involved in this process not

only to assist but to control its shape and direction; and at what point modernization would cease to be useful to hemispheric solidarity and become a source of competition among autonomous and sovereign nations. These questions are readily apparent in the terms of trade agreements struck between the United States and its Latin partners, as well as the dependency of the latter on the U.S. market as part of Good Neighbor Policy negotiations and exertions of political influence.³⁷

In tracing the history of popular culture in Latin America from the conquest up to 1940, William Rowe and Vivian Schelling justifiably cite the process of modernization as a primary source of discontinuity in different forms of cultural expression (the examples they give are the hybrid Andean song-and-dance form known as *huayno*, and the more recent *tango* in the Southern Cone). Yet they depict modernity not as a social and cultural “watershed” located at a specific historical moment, but rather as occurring in a series of disruptions, such as “changes in communications media, . . . social revolutions, industrialization and population migrations” that bring about the eclipsing or adaptive transformation of cultural forms.³⁸

As a critical trigger point within this series, World War II can be seen as having a profound effect on the experience of modernity within the hemisphere not only in accelerating the fortification, consolidation, and vehement defense of the nation-state but also by bringing the contrast between North American and Latin American processes of modernization into glaring focus. Since the war, modernity has become unambiguously associated in popular and political discourse with *North*, as compared to Latin, American lifeways and physical environments. In effect, modernity served as an important phenomenal and symbolic strategic weapon (albeit more as a carrot than as a stick) for the United States during this period, since Germany was doing relatively little to modernize the infrastructure of Latin America, concentrating instead on the extraction of natural resources. Reinforcing an increasingly peripheral role for European nations in Latin American economies were the displacement and outnumbering of German aviation routes to Latin America by U.S. carriers, along with the building of naval and air bases by the U.S. military at strategic Atlantic locations, including the air base at Natal, near Fortaleza (see map 2, page 26).³⁹

Within the realm of film history, World War II can be seen as a major source of discontinuity related both to the modernization and consolidation of Latin American film industries, especially in Mexico and Brazil, and to the need to “update” the construction of neocolonial subjectivity to suit the strategic and material needs of the United States during and after the war. The changes in these film industries were, of course, not isolated or coincidental but, as Schelling and Rowe suggest, linked to broader waves of development that had occurred in both Brazil and Mexico from the turn of the century onward: the intensification of urbanization (and concomitantly,

rural-to-urban migration in search of employment); changes in communications (radio as well as cinema); transportation (the expansion of aviation and automobile transport); and labor unrest, of which the *jangadeiros*' pilgrimage to Rio was but a small, if symbolically important, part.

Throughout the endotext of *It's All True*, modernity is portrayed as a palpable source of social and cultural change that Welles seems to suggest does not always guarantee progress or improvement where human relations and the daily quality of life are concerned; on the contrary, there are unique forms of livelihood and cultural expression that are at risk of being lost. State- and corporate-mandated modernity (although the sources remain mostly nameless or veiled by spectacle) enters into tension, then, with peaceful and democratic forms of protest, whether it is Chico jumping into the ring to save his bull from slaughter, Captain Grant's work stoppage on the arctic icebreaker, or the samba celebrants jamming a farewell to Square Eleven at the height of Carnival in Rio. Meanwhile, the film as a whole marks a significant shift in Welles's own discursive orientation (if not political disposition) toward less industrially developed parts of the world. This shift can be roughly described as a move from a Conradian preoccupation with the self-destructive tendencies of modern Western man borne out in a confrontation between man and nature (with nature encompassing native cultures) to a concern with precisely how Western industrial models are affecting modernizing societies south of the United States–Mexico border.

This preoccupation translates into a marked shift in casting, characterization, and the focalization of the narrative, moving from the perspective of the "white," Euro-American male (as in "The Captain's Chair," echoing that of the "Algiers" radio program and the unproduced screenplay for *Heart of Darkness*),⁴⁰ to the inscription of subaltern and geosocially marginal viewpoints in neocolonial settings, thereby provoking a *decentering* of Western industrialized subjectivity within and beyond the text, especially considering the broadened hemispheric reach of the audience for U.S. wartime film. The decentering of narration and the *mise-en-scène* in relation to Western "white" subjectivity not only bore consequences for the reception of Welles's filmmaking by studio executives but necessarily questioned the status of Afro-diasporic and Latin American identity in relation to the U.S. self-image. I prefer to see this not as a momentary, diplomatically motivated break within Welles's oeuvre but as a profound reorientation with consequences for subsequent depictions of the tyrannical (and concomitantly self-destructive) tendencies of Euro-American masculinity in films such as *The Stranger*, *The Lady from Shanghai*, *Mr. Arkadin*, *Touch of Evil*, and *Chimes at Midnight*.

Equally pertinent is the way in which Welles's audiovisual work as a whole references various thresholds of modernity in both source material and narrative form, as well as in theme and setting. Welles himself remarked how his Shakespearean adaptations such as *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *Chimes at Mid-*

night address the sundering and reconfiguration of one “world” by another, an inexorable process that is tied to the modern condition and adds an allegorical dimension to the tragic unfolding of events in the primary diegesis. One can easily extend this same observation to films set in the twentieth century, such as *The Magnificent Ambersons* and *Touch of Evil*. In its self-conscious decentering of Western “white” subjectivity, North and South, *It’s All True* is at the brighter end of this equation, in that it is both more contemporary and less dystopian than the Shakespearean and Tarkington adaptations, and considerably less sordid and violent in its depictions of modernizing culture than *Touch of Evil*. Throughout the endotext, the modernization project is portrayed from two different and potentially contradictory angles. Ultimately, in the Latin American episodes, it is presented as a promising space within which national and hemispheric dialogue can occur—although the melancholy undertones leading up to the moment of modern syncretism in each episode indicate Welles’s trepidation toward the impact of non-self-determined modernization on human relations and local cultural identity, whether the latter is metaphorized in the train that takes Bonito to the metropolitan bullring, or in the anticipated razing of Square Eleven by the Vargas government in Brazil.

Thus, there is a cautionary note in the film and, more directly, in contemporary press interviews given by Welles regarding the threat of neo-colonial domination by the United States, legitimated in theory by the war and in strategy by Rockefeller’s inter-American project, of which Welles was, for the time being, a willing exponent. Of course, this warning, like the experimentation with silent shooting methods, was not without its aesthetic and historical consequences for the film; it could, for example, constitute a source for the excess that one senses in the denouement of each episode: all of Mexico, sunshine and shade, cheering in unison for Bonito, the *jangadeiros* arriving “just in time” for Carnival, and so forth. One should be careful to note Welles’s sustained commitment to modernist film aesthetics, even as he began to show greater skepticism toward the unequal effects of modern socioeconomic “development.”

AFRO-DIASPORA

Another crucial Wellesian meridian concerns Afro-diaspora in the New World as both a linking concept across the episodes and a tangible source of aesthetic inspiration. In *It’s All True*, Afro-diaspora is expressed most obviously in the focus on jazz music in the United States and on samba music in Brazil, but it is also evidenced in the plan to inscribe the deep history of *jangadeiro* activism, beginning with the *jangadeiros*’ movement for the abolition of slavery in the early 1880s, into the culminating scenes of the “Jangadeiros” episode. Offscreen, this theme finds its way into correspondence

and conversations between Orson Welles, the participants of the episodes (“The Story of Jazz,” “Carnaval”), and Welles’s screenwriter in Brazil, Robert Meltzer.

In key portions of the endotext, diaspora functions both synchronically as a vital mode of “people-to-people” communication during a period of wartime isolation (hence the potential value of introducing Louis Armstrong as an ambassador of American culture in Europe) and as a locus of historical memory calling attention to the way in which the trauma, displacement, marginalization, and transposition of cultural practices associated with the transatlantic slave trade (which nonetheless find their way into the “mainstream” of modernizing nations in the mid-twentieth century) constitute a *shared* experience for many people living in the hemisphere. (It should be remembered that 1942 was less than a century away from abolition in major slave-trading centers and only a half century away from transatlantic, trans-Caribbean, and interregional migrations owing to economic and political crises in Europe, the Spanish-American War, and the fallout from Reconstruction in the American South). Hence, within the quadropartite structure of *It’s All True*, Afro-diaspora works as an internationalist concept that “de-ghettoizes” black expression and is given new life in the transnational popular-music circuit traversing the Americas during World War II. One finds this circuit referenced in the Cassino da Urca scene of “Carnaval” and the Chicago and New York nightclub sequences of “The Story of Jazz.” The principle of the “call-and-response” communication and performative format is somewhat implicit in the term *diaspora* itself, and Welles clearly experiments with it as a structuring device in “Carnaval” and “The Story of Jazz.”

Welles’s relationship to Afro-diaspora as a cultural concept and active circuit of discourse tied to the formation of modern black identity can be traced back at least as far as the production of “Voodoo” *Macbeth* (Federal Theatre Project, 1936), which recenters Shakespeare’s play around the regime and personage of Henri Christophe, king of the newly independent Haiti in the early nineteenth century. Welles’s use of the term, which was not in wide public circulation at the time, indicates his degree of familiarity with intellectual debates within the African American community in the aftermath of the Harlem Renaissance, particularly those involving the access of African American artists to classical art forms versus their assimilation in less distinctive and more subordinate ways in relationship to Anglo “white” society—exemplified by the well-known debate between W. E. B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington, respectively.⁴¹ Welles regularly attended African American cultural salons in the middle to late thirties in upper Manhattan and in New Jersey (see fig. 29), and it can safely be claimed that he ardently sided with DuBois on this question. This pro-integration stance coincided with Welles’s long-range concern over the reconciliation, and even fusion, especially in



Figure 29. Orson Welles with Duke Ellington (*left*) and Cab Calloway (*right*) at Café Society, New York City, 1943. Courtesy Frank Driggs Collection.

his theatrical and radio works, of “popular” with “classical” or elite cultural tradition. (In an episode of the *I Love Lucy* television series, Welles signs record albums of his Shakespearean readings in a New York department store, then onstage at Ricky’s nightclub delivers Romeo’s soliloquy from *Romeo and Juliet* after using Lucy [renamed Lu Ci] as his assistant in a magic act.)⁴²

Throughout Welles’s creative work in connection with Afro-diasporic peoples, one finds an interrogation through *counterpractice* of the social and racial segregation of genres and modes of enunciation in contemporary U.S. theatrical and cinematic production. Welles was harshly criticized for this transgression, especially in relation to his productions of “Voodoo” *Macbeth* and *Native Son*. In the endotext, this counterpractice takes the form, for example, of the “Ave Maria no Morro” sequence (evoked using original footage in the 1993 documentary), where the Schubert composition is adapted to reflect the perspective of the (mostly) Afro-Brazilians who live in Rio shantytowns and functions structurally as a segue to the samba practice. Offscreen, Welles observed that Grande Othelo, well known for his charismatic ren-

dering of the Brazilian equivalent of “tomming” and “hybrid blackface,” along with his more genuine Carnival “dandy” song-and-dance performances in Brazilian musical comedies, would nevertheless have been a great “tragic actor,” and he regretted not being able to put this hidden talent to full use.⁴³ Although Othelo is not altogether a tragic figure in the “Carnaval” episode, he does wax melancholic as Carnival draws to a close and the destruction of Praça Onze becomes imminent. Moreover, his ubiquity throughout “Carnaval” as an unapologetic *malandro*, setting the tone for various musical numbers and lines of collective action, would have given the spectator pause as to just what the social agency of the urban Afro-Brazilian male was in relation to national screen representation, let alone the Carnival celebration itself. Finally, the casting in “The Story of Jazz” of jazz pianist Hazel Scott should also be mentioned, as she easily crossed the sociocultural boundaries between bluesy swing and classical modes in her live performances, and has been cited as “one of the first black artists to refuse to appear before segregated audiences.”⁴⁴

On a larger scale, one finds the articulations between vernacular, popular, and mass forms of cultural expression adumbrated in the dialogism that informs the internal structure of, and the potential comparative dynamic between, the “Jazz” and “Carnaval” episodes. Through their possible juxtaposition in the film, jazz and samba performance enter into a hemispheric circuit, affirming the “real-life” initiatives of Louis Armstrong, Ray Ventura, and Carmen Miranda. Whereas in the former episode, blackness is shown to be a vital component of national identity and modern popular culture, in the latter, it is elevated to a transnational exercise in call-and-response (especially in the Urca finale) that forms a discursive base for hemispheric identification and solidarity in the four-part film. In so doing, Welles moves away from jazz and samba as spectacle to present Afro-based musical composition and performance as integral to national and international cultural practice in the modern age. Yet he does this without ignoring the need to foreground the continuing links of these musical forms to their ethnic and cultural roots: “The Story of Jazz” screenplay ends in a jam session; “Carnaval” was to end with a nostalgic last glance at Praça Onze prior to its destruction. Crucially, the exposition of these roots takes the form not of a travelogue or cinematic equivalent of a dioramic display but within spaces of popular performance and congregation as yet unappropriated by “white” Euro-American society, with the characters and musicians simply “being themselves.”

At the same time, it should be noted that if jazz and samba achieve this power of mediation in the film, it is partly because Welles de-essentializes them as “race-based” modes of creative expression. Although they each serve as vehicles for the transmission of Afro-diasporic cultural memory and creative agency in the modern national sphere, they also constitute spaces of interracial dialogue as shown on the screen.

“SAMBA IN BERLIN”: THE POWER
OF DIALOGISM AND BAROQUE AESTHETICS

As a signifier of cultural mixing and the reconciliation of sociohistorical difference, linguistic and iconographic hybridity appeared in many genre films that were focused on nation building and inter-American dialogue during World War II. In the wake of modern forms of colonial domination (which date back to the fifteenth century), such hybridity has also been postulated as the symptomatic and ambivalent form through which colonized subjects have been able to articulate their resistance against the colonizer.⁴⁵ Yet there is nothing inherent in the concept that dictates the precise form it will take in a given context, or the valence and terms of interaction (if any) among the hybridized and potentially dissonant or conflicting components. Hybridity, then, is not necessarily “liberating,” even when it is of the second, postcolonial variety, nor should it be branded as essentially “postmodern.” As an effect of modernity, and frequently found in the popular middle ground of representation in developing societies, it can be harnessed to different cultural and ideological agendas.

As a case in point, there are considerable discursive, if not necessarily formal, distinctions between the hybrid constructions of contemporary and ancient indigenous cultures in Eisenstein’s *¡Que Viva Mexico!* and those found in Mexican director Emilio “El Indio” Fernández’s indigenist melodramas of the forties, several of which reflect the heavy influence of the Eisensteinian compositions. Yet again, there are distinctions between the cultural and religious syncretism in Eisenstein’s “Fiesta” episode and “Day of the Dead” sequence (or “Epilogue”) and the syncretism of Welles and Foster’s “Blessing of the Animals” in “My Friend Bonito” and the “Ave Maria no Morro” sequence of “Carnaval.” In *¡Que Viva Mexico!* iconographic hybridity is inscribed within a dialectical structure that builds on the centuries-old opposition between Spanish and indigenous cultures and culminates in the unfinished episode dedicated to the Mexican Revolution of 1910. However, in Fernández’s indigenist films, it is the result, first, of the Hollywoodian influence in casting practices whereby socioculturally “white” actors, such as Dolores del Río and Pedro Armendáriz, play leading “indigenous” roles and, second, of the transmission of postrevolutionary state discourse regarding the inclusion of marginalized indigenous sectors in national development, not to mention the premium placed on *mestizaje* as the ultimate expression of national integration. In *It’s All True*, one finds an intermediary position whereby ethnic and cultural hybridity speaks to the need and promise of the reconciliation of deeply rooted differences in both Mexico and Brazil (and thus takes its cue from populist state discourse), yet is presented within a dialogical structure and discursively open modes of presentation so that the film itself can serve as an *agent* of transculturation. Of course, this is not to deny

the role already played by hybridity in the popular rituals found in each of these films: the Holy Feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Xochimilco as a commercialized space of work and leisure (*Maria Candelaria*), the Day of the Dead (*Que Viva México!*), the Blessing of the Animals on Corpus Christi, and the warming of the tambourines before samba practice on the hill (*It's All True*).

Occasionally, transculturation functioned as a tool of "soft-core" propaganda during World War II. According to Edmar Morel, it was Orson Welles and his large coterie of writers and technicians who first introduced Coca-Cola to Brazil, and it soon became the coveted drink of the Brazilian intelligentsia and artistic circles in Rio, Brazil's capital.⁴⁶ Later, in Fortaleza, young women who dated American soldiers based in nearby Natal were nicknamed "Coca-Colas." More pertinently, Welles is credited with inventing "Samba in Berlin," or *cachaça* (cane liquor) with Coca-Cola, which not only became a popular local drink but also was adopted as the title of a 1943 *chanchada* (or musical review, directed by Luiz de Barros at Cinédia Studio) that quotes material from Welles's "Carnaval." The mixing of metaphors in the drink's name points to the extent to which Welles, while shooting at various locations, actively sought to bridge the unavoidable contrasts in culture and language he encountered by way of hybrid amalgamations of style and content, along with the dialogical structuring of ethnographic material within and between the episodes. The Easter procession in Ouro Preto both echoes and contrasts with the samba processions leading into Praça Onze and down Carioca Avenue, and yet again with the solemn funeral procession in "Jangadeiros," which leads to the resurrection of Jacaré's memory through the decision to make the *raid* to Rio. The *jangadeiros* arrive from their *raid* in time for Carnival, where the *jangada* is turned into a float and they in turn are transformed into modern gentlemen.

At the same time, the mixed metaphor is suggestive of how Welles might have conceived of hemispheric solidarity as benefiting from the fusion of modern industrialized mass (Coca-Cola) with traditional and regional (*cachaça*) practices, together with the notion that fascism (of the Berlin variety) could best be subverted through carnivalesque and diasporic (samba), rather than formal political or militaristic, means.⁴⁷ A use value for such cross-cultural and transregional improvisations was created within the context of pan-Americanism, beyond their perfunctory status as "coping mechanisms."

The dialogical rhetorical strategies (including choreography) and the contrastive sequencing of scenes and episodes in *It's All True* do not appear to have been entirely preconceived, although one can find traces of each in Welles's previous theatrical and film work (notably in the plays "Voodoo" *Macbeth*, and *Caesar* (1937) and in *Citizen Kane*—as in the juxtaposition of the reporter Thompson's first, hapless visit to the desolate El Rancho nightclub with his constrained visit to the cavernous Thatcher Memorial Library). Instead, they developed as Welles pursued different themes, shooting strate-

gies, and styles over the course of his immersion in Brazilian and Mexican cultures. Regardless of choices that might have been made in postproduction, the deep-structural evolution of *It's All True* in the direction of dialogism and transculturation would not have been possible without the open-endedness adopted toward the production process.

As a structuring principle, the hybridity that one finds in many of Welles's films is linked more to a baroque and liminal aesthetic sensibility in Welles than to kitsch—although, as in kitsch, there is a stress on the strength of impurity in cultural expression, as well as the inevitability of some degree of hypertextuality, or the act of borrowing from, and commenting on, existing texts. Welles's baroque constructions in films such as *Citizen Kane*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Othello*, *Mr. Arkadin*, and *Touch of Evil* speak to the desire, and inevitable difficulty, of reconciling old and new, emitting a melancholic tone that resonates with the denouements of "My Friend Bonito" and "Carnaval." These traits, along with the discursive openness of many of Welles's hybrid constructions, are captured in his description, written in later years, of the modern matador: "It is as an artist that he must be praised or condemned: as a sculptor working in the most difficult of raw materials, a ballet dancer with the most deadly dangerous of partners, a tragic actor, bright in the spangles of carnival and the harlequinade, shedding—and bleeding—real blood."⁴⁸

Throughout his work, Welles seems to have argued against the purity and strict usage of "genre," which he seems to have perceived also as a cultural means of social stratification (for example, the way in which tragedy is customarily about calamities that happen to nobility, to be played by "noble" actors), and hence his frustration at not being able to immediately explore Grande Othello's talents as a tragic actor. Interestingly, he expressed a staunch resistance to the generic classification of *It's All True*, even for the sake of publicity: "I'm making a picture that is neither a travelogue, a documentary film, a boy meets girl romance nor a glorified newsreel. It's going to be a new medium of entertainment when it's completed."⁴⁹

Whereas hybridity results from the juxtaposition of, and intercutting between, different forms of cultural expression, styles, settings, or moods, dialogism is the result of such juxtapositions and manipulations at deeper levels of construction, including the place assigned in the text to the inferred author in relation to the pro-filmic protagonists and the projected viewer. In general, dialogism has been defined as a representational strategy in three variants:

1. The explicit placement of culturally specific utterances in relation to utterances of other origins and genres, whereby the cultures in question can be "mutually enriched" without losing their "unity" or "identity" (the equivalent of syncretism).

2. The author's loosening of his or her "hold" over the protagonists in a text while retaining "control over the overall conception of the whole."
3. The transmission of information, intra- and extratextually, by way of an "exchange of responses by two speakers" (or more).⁵⁰

One finds evidence of all three variants (respectively) inscribed in the work in progress of *It's All True*:

1. The voyage of Chico, the young mestizo in "My Friend Bonito," to Mexico City, where he learns to worship "Christ the Father" as well as the Virgin of Guadalupe (herself a highly syncretic figure within Mexican Catholicism); also, the retiming of the *jangadeiros*' arrival in Rio to coincide with Carnival, provoking a blending of regional cultures within national contexts.
2. Welles's collaborations with local experts who not only helped him draft script material but also, in the case of Herivelto Martins and George Fanto, applied their cultural and geographic knowledge to help him choreograph individual shots and scenes; also, Welles's choice of nonprofessional actors, who incorporated their own experience into their performances, along with seasoned professionals—such as Domingo Soler and Chucho Solórzano in Mexico, or Grande Othelo and Linda Batista in Brazil—rather than casting them as colorful extras.
3. The reflexive strategies in narration, such as the dialogue between the offscreen narrator and the *jangadeiros* in an early script version of the "Making the Jangada" scene in "Jangadeiros," or between the offscreen narrator and Kid Ory in "The Story of Jazz"; the call-and-response editing strategy in the "Batuque no Morro" scene in "Carnaval"; and the Godardian "press conference" scene in "Jangadeiros," where the *jangadeiros* address the camera.

What is perhaps most striking in the construction of *It's All True* is the plurivocality that results from both the hybrid juxtaposing and the dialogical structuring of utterances: the audience would have "heard from" and seen many different Mexicans and Brazilians, and in the early version, North Americans, in the course of viewing the film. This dialogism and plurivocality are what distinguish *It's All True* most markedly from its contemporary "Good Neighbor" counterparts, as will be further explored in the next chapter.

THE WELLESIAN DISCOURSE ON POWER, MARGINALITY, AND MEDIATION

The theme of power in human relationships, often depicted in the uncomfortable collision of the private and public spheres, the personal with the sociopolitical, recurs throughout the film oeuvre of Orson Welles and, together with his ambivalent response to the contemporary directions taken by modernity, is often at the crux of his deployment of allegory. This allegorical dimension prevails in his fifties films such as *Othello*, *Mr. Arkadin*, and *Touch of Evil*, yet it is also palpably present in his earliest films, including *It's*

All True. The centrality of the overall theme for Welles is underscored by his casting of himself in roles that either motivate or are accessorial to the staging of these power struggles. Most prominently, one can cite his performances as the newspaper magnate and would-be politician Charles Foster Kane; as Michael O'Hara, the hired and framed sailor in *The Lady from Shanghai*; as the bloodthirstythane-turned-king Macbeth in the film adaptation of *Macbeth*; as the betrayed Moorish general Othello in *Othello*; as the enigmatic and paranoid millionaire Gregory Arkadin in *Mr. Arkadin*; as the corrupt border town sheriff Hank Quinlan in *Touch of Evil*; as well as the Nazi spy, Lionel Transit, in the unshot adaptation of *The Way to Santiago*, and as the corrupt Louisiana politician Huey Long in the earlier stages of *It's All True*. Other directors and producers followed Welles's lead, casting him in equally pivotal and often villainous roles, such as black marketer Harry Lime in Carroll Reed's 1949 film, *The Third Man*. Within the context of inter-American representation, it is interesting to note that in the "social problem" thriller *Man in the Shadow*, directed by Jack Arnold (Universal, 1957), Welles plays a wealthy Anglo rancher who orders the fatal beating of a young Mexican worker whom he has accused of courting his daughter, a theme repeated with a twist in *Touch of Evil*.⁵¹ In the Italo-Spanish spaghetti Western *Tepepa, o Viva la Revolución* (1968), set at the time of the Mexican Revolution, he was cast as a cruel general, Cascorro, who thwarts the efforts of Tepepa, an illiterate farm laborer, to redistribute a plot of land among poor farmers.⁵² As Welles would remark later in life, these roles reflected political and ethical stances (or their absence) that he abhorred; yet emotions could be found at their core that, as a humanist, he felt compelled to understand and make available to the audience.⁵³ This ambivalence is summarized in the statement "I have played a whole line of egotists, and I detest egotism. . . . But an actor is not a devil's advocate: he is a lover."⁵⁴

Like his contemporaries John Barrymore and José Ferrer, Welles had the ability to inject with his presence a charismatic intensity into lesser roles that might otherwise not convey such power, such as the embittered "fall guy" Michael O'Hara, the lawyer Hastler in *The Trial* (1962), or the jovial drifter Sir John Falstaff in *Chimes at Midnight*. Welles's uneven casting of himself, alternately as power figures or as dupes or outsiders (and on occasion, as both), points to his anthropological understanding of power as entailing the positioning of the individual in relation to a hegemonic social formation: shifts in power from one leader to another necessitate the spatial redemarcation of social boundaries and a temporal transition to a new era with a distinct set of beliefs, values, and rules of conduct. The stakes placed on different social orders and their corresponding cosmic worldviews in mounting power struggles that erupt before the film's end are, of course, at the heart of the plots of *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *The Stranger*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Touch of Evil*, and *Chimes at Midnight*. In at least three of these works, the struggles are in-

tegrally linked to the theme of modern transition discussed earlier, and to Welles's nostalgia for the social equilibrium found in premodern forms of sociality. In other words, the violent and treacherous means used to destroy the premodern world are shown to have soon become "ends in and of themselves," the *modus operandi* of modern existence. The finitude of all power structures (attached precisely to the concept of hegemony), meanwhile, that is implicit in these struggles injects an element of helplessness or vulnerability in the initially powerful characters, accentuating the humanism of Welles's characterizations as confirmed by his performances. A precedent for this theme and its consequences for the perpetrators of violent resistance to change can also be found in abundance, of course, in Shakespeare's plays, such as *The Merchant of Venice*, in which Welles would have played the ill-fated, momentarily powerful Shylock, and which he was never able to complete as a film.

It is important to note that the power struggles in Welles's films are not abstract and all-encompassing (as are the hidden threats in some noir, sci-fi, or action films), but are always embodied in the characters and are often rooted in inner struggles of conscience (*The Stranger*, *Othello*, *Mr. Arkadin*, *Chimes at Midnight*). These latter renderings tend to be matched by expressionist lighting and disequilibrium in the *mise-en-scène*, along with noticeable gaps in syntax. Moreover, by casting himself as the incurable "villain" in *Touch of Evil* and *The Stranger*, Welles gives a human face to racism, fascism, and the institutional apparatuses that support them, thereby calling attention to the treacherous immediacy of such ideologies in that they are aspects of *subjectivity* intermingled with other "understandably human" traits in what are consistently "white" male individuals. Emerging within otherwise benign social groupings, racists and fascists with blood on their hands are shown to survive through the complicity of others. In *The Stranger*, the Connecticut townspeople not only accept the Nazi war criminal Franz Kindler, alias Charles Rankin (played by Welles), in their midst just after the war has ended but allow him to teach at a local school for boys. And bigotry and corruption are not eliminated from the border town of Los Robles in *Touch of Evil* until Menzies is willing to betray Hank Quinlan by extracting a recorded confession of the latter's framing of a young Mexican suspect in the fatal car bombing of a local tycoon. Indeed, Welles seems intent upon showing that when they are on the verge of losing their power, even the most seemingly invincible tyrants become quite helpless and vulnerable. This is perhaps why Welles prolongs the suspense of Kindler's entrapment, and then mechanical stabbing, at the top of the town clock tower, and why the revelation of Menzies's betrayal acquires an edge of poignancy, with a visibly pained Quinlan shooting at his old friend as he wallows to his death in the shallow, dirty river separating the United States from Mexico. The exposition of vulnerability in powerful individuals, therefore, often coincides with their spatial

marginalization: as James Naremore has put it, "The Faustian proto-fascist in a Welles movie usually turns into a sort of perverse Don Quixote."⁵⁵

By contrast, in *It's All True*, one finds these power struggles either so implicit within the narrative structure as to be elliptical or elusive (with the notable exception of "Jangadeiros," the unshot "Captain's Chair" and "Atawallpa") or lurking at the perimeter of the diegesis like a dominant order about to implode on the social dynamics within the text ("My Friend Bonito"). If anything, Welles appears to make every effort to emphasize the *possibility of dialogue* between the powerless or disenfranchised and those who retain effective national power. No doubt, this was a diplomatic gesture on his part, yet it points to a noticeable shift, beginning with *It's All True* and lasting through the fifties, in the Wellesian discourse on power. This shift from an anthropological and melodramatic exploration to more historically situated treatments, in which the audience is potentially implicated in the struggle "offscreen," was no doubt prompted by World War II, with its impact on the collective sense of morality and on the *portrayal* of centralized political power on the screen and in the printed press, as well as on the configuration of global economic and power relations in favor of Euro-American hegemony.

Writing toward the end of the 1964-inaugurated Brazilian military dictatorship, Cinema Novo filmmaker Glauber Rocha commented on what he saw as the anticolonialist, antifascist thrust of the Wellesian discourse on power: "O.W. [Orson Welles] launched a vigorous attack on Man corrupted by power and always defeated that Dictator with the force of someone who slaughters and destroys a worm. . . . He demystified geniality and transformed himself into the *alter ego* of the United States. . . . [In *Citizen Kane*] Welles makes a psychological rather than economic critique of Kane, [who is] a metaphor for phallic imperialist power, but he explains economic power by means of frustrated political paranoia."⁵⁶

This broader, culturally and historically inflected vector of interpretation is echoed by the exiled Cuban writer Guillermo Cabrera Infante: "Arkadin is the last Faustian fascist of the cinema, just as Kane had been one of the first."⁵⁷ Actress Ruth Warrick (who played Kane's first wife, Emily, in *Citizen Kane*) has also commented on the breadth of the possible historical referents for Welles's characterizations, leading, by way of synecdoche, out of the biographical and into the social realm of interpretation: "You must realize that *Citizen Kane* was never meant to be strictly the William Randolph Hearst story. If it had been, it would never have been passed by the Hayes [*sic*] Office. Orson told me, 'It is supposed to be the story of *all* the men who became our heroes and then turned into the despoilers of America.'"⁵⁸

Yet, could Welles always afford to be so bold, especially while on a diplomatic mission? To reduce the Wellesian representation of power to a sheer synecdochic relationship between powerful individuals and historical in-

stances of power in protomodern and modern Western societies would be misleading; for such transparency in representation would open the possibility for clear-cut plot resolutions (in the vein of Frank Capra's *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, 1939, or George Lucas's *Star Wars*, 1977), not to mention greater interference in the production and release of subsequent films. Instead, Welles chooses a less straightforward, elliptical approach. He courts and foregrounds the portrayal of corruption and undesirable excess in power as if to "cure" these tendencies in democratic and protodemocratic societies by repulsing the spectator, thereby toying with the vectors of identification. The destructiveness of power is problematic precisely because it wears a human face: it appears in *mediated* form. To be eradicated, it must be unmasked, our potential sympathy for the characters that embody it set aside. By casting himself in roles with which he does not sympathize, and which evoke pity or contempt on the part of the viewer, Welles achieves this effect, literally throwing his own body and voice into the diegesis as a "buffer zone." Thus, in casting himself as the neophyte U.S. "tourist" in the 1943 wrap-around screenplay (reiterated in the cutting continuity drafted by José Noriega for "My Friend Bonito"), Welles belied the extent to which he was able to immerse and hybridize himself in relation to Latin American culture, even as he was able to mediate between state powers and their respective relationship to working people in the Americas.

In the process, there is a return to the "layered" presentation of the real, producing the tension between documentary and fiction. Jonathan Rosenbaum has commented on the allegorical references to McCarthyism both in *Othello*, filmed during the introduction of the Hollywood blacklist, following the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) hearings in Washington, and in *Touch of Evil*, produced in the United States once the "heat" of interrogation had lessened but the effects of blacklisting had already sunk in.⁵⁹ Just as easily, one can read these films as referencing, first, European or American colonialism, along with racial discrimination in the U.S. armed forces (*Othello*), and, second, racially motivated suspensions of human and civil rights in the criminal justice system (*Touch of Evil*, produced in the aftermath of the McCarran-Walter Act, which led to the arrest and arbitrary deportation of countless Mexicans and Mexican-Americans during the fifties). In some cases, the allegory creates a parallel register of representation and interpretation, as in *The Lady from Shanghai*, where O'Hara's "shark story" resonates with his observation, after witnessing a group of American tourists, that there is something altogether too "bright and guilty" about Acapulco.

There is ample reason to suspect that this degree and subtlety of allegory is largely absent from *It's All True* (perhaps with the exception of the "Atawallpa" episode, about which we know little), an absence that reminds us of the difficulty of emplotting and deciphering allegory in a cross-cultural context, not to mention its potential threat, if misread, to diplomatic relations.

Moreover, Welles is careful to inscribe rhetorical endorsements for the newly allied governments of Mexico and Brazil. Nevertheless, one finds a strong sense of the centrality of power struggles and the relationship between mediation and historical consciousness in the referencing of “deep history” (such as the abolition of slavery in relation to the *jangadeiros*) along with the search for historical and cultural analogies between the United States, on the one hand, and Mexican, Brazilian, and Andean experiences as all part of an “American” struggle for freedom and equality. The inscription of dialogical relations among individuals, communities, or nations in the film presupposes the existence of some kind of power relationship, whether it is bound by convention or obligation or whether a utopian space is being created where a new, free exchange can take place—and both options can be found in *It's All True*. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the Brazilian Carnival celebration, where inversions of social status and everyday roles through masquerade and uses of performative ritual are the norm. When set within the larger context of the pan-American historical process, this yearly ritual is endowed with transformative potential, leading one to suspect that after the war, gender, racial, and class relations will no longer be the same. Once the local dilemmas of power imbalances and popular aspirations toward citizenship and justice have been exposed, it becomes possible for the spectator to extract sufficient historical relevance to link them to more geoculturally proximate circumstances.

Within the “macro” text of *It's All True*, then, there is a reiterated concern with participatory democracy not only as the basis for hemispheric security in ideological and institutional terms against the incursion of Axis influence but also as an experiential basis for communication and understanding, as well as a means of ensuring that basic human needs are met and rights are upheld (especially in “Jangadeiros”) throughout the hemisphere. Yet, Welles cautions, such democratic principles cannot really be fulfilled in the absence of a *sustainable* dialogue between the powerful and the powerless, as well as among the various social formations and ethnic groupings within a given nation. Such a dialogue presupposes, of course, the capacity for listening and the willingness to redistribute power on the part of the powerful.

These latter ideas find pronounced expression as structuring mechanisms in the plots and pro-filmic spatial relations of the endotext. In “My Friend Bonito,” a poor mestizo boy is able to enter into “dialogue” with President Avila Camacho by way of Bonito’s bravery, and in so doing, points to the need for an ongoing dialogue, if not cultural and political dialectic, between the Spanish and indigenous sectors of Mexican society as a premise for building a powerful nation-state. The final montage of the arrival in “Jangadeiros” is to lead to the face-to-face dialogue between the impoverished and geosocially marginalized *jangadeiros* and the populist dictator Getúlio Vargas. And in “Carnaval,” a national modern celebration is shown to be the peaceful

product of a seasonal (if not daily) dialogue between the different social and racial sectors of Rio de Janeiro, relying on a single, yet varied, form of musical expression.

To remain effective, participatory democracy in many parts of the hemisphere requires a degree of social renewal (of enfranchisement and redistribution of resources), if not outright sociopolitical change, along with the dismantling of archaic mechanisms of ethnic and social domination and economic oppression. The political relevance of “Jangadeiros” hinges on the possibility delineated in the plot for precisely such a change in a neglected sector of Brazilian society, while the repeated foregrounding of the Praça Onze celebration in “Carnaval” can arguably be said to constitute a thinly veiled plea for greater dialogue and tolerance on the part of the government regarding the social uses of urban space and the need to affirm one’s ethnic roots through cultural practice. It is also a demonstration of the degree to which strong affirmations of Afro-Brazilian cultural identity can both nurture and harmonize with the formation of national popular culture. In all three of the shot episodes, the planned inclusion of a direct dialogue through gesture (“Bonito”), music (“Carnaval”), and speech (“Jangadeiros”) between marginalized subjects and central state power can be seen as an exhortation for these powers to back their rhetoric with concrete action. Such representations within a semidocumentary format at a time of war would have been at least compromising for the participants, if not effectively binding.

In addition to these textual references to power configurations, it should not be forgotten that tremendous demonstrations of political and economic power at the international level, along with rapid shifts in institutional power at the national level, surrounded the making of *It’s All True*. Apart from the effects that these developments might have had on the thematization of power within the endotext, Welles’s unabashed concern during this period with the excess and abuse of power, whether in an electoral democracy such as the United States, a struggling democracy as in Mexico, or an authoritarian democracy (oxymoronic as it sounds) in Brazil, clearly held a special appeal for liberal and progressive Latin Americans in the years to come, as attested by the commentaries of Rocha and Cabrera Infante, among others.

Implicit in the tension between elitist (whether oligarchic or autocratic) concentrations of power and participatory democracy built on dialogue is the problem of cultural marginality, and the concomitant difficulty of giving voice to marginal subjectivities during a period of state and corporate capital hegemony in the production and distribution of audiovisual media. Welles took steps to address this problem by placing his own body and voice at the spatial margins as narrator, and at the center of the diegesis as a character possessing power or privilege, so as to mediate between the socioculturally disparate phenomena portrayed and the hemispheric viewing public. These strategies can be found to recur throughout Welles’s film and radio

oeuvre, although the fascination with the marginal might be more readily noted in the work of Jean Renoir and Luis Buñuel, who belonged to a previous generation yet were producing contemporaneously with Welles. Elsewhere in Welles's oeuvre, this concern with marginality takes the pro-filmic form of casting and characterization, accented dialogue that is not always understood, and the choice and use of settings: in *Touch of Evil*, the tawdry honky-tonks and jaded characters of Los Robles, the motel clerk and the blind woman in a laundry; in *The Lady from Shanghai*, the Chinatown theater and the abandoned amusement park; in *Othello*, the bathhouse, the barracks, the cistern, all converted from centuries-old dwellings and public buildings in Mogador; in *Mr. Arkadin*, Arkadin's eccentric former associates in Europe and the musty, ramshackle places in Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Munich, and Naples, where they have gone to hide; and in *Chimes at Midnight*, the rustic tavern where Falstaff drinks, dozes, and reigns.

In *It's All True*, the dialogue between "margin" and "center" operates as much at the metadiscursive level as it does within the diegesis to promote a sense of social cohesion and solidarity in the face of Axis aggression. As I have argued, the potential for democracy in Latin America is shown to be premised on the possibility of effective dialogue between marginal sectors (the *jangadeiros*, Chico as a rural mestizo) and central leaders (Getúlio Vargas, Manuel Avila Camacho) and other members of the national elite, just as Louis Armstrong's transatlantic success in "The Story of Jazz" attests to the power of democratic culture and respect for racial difference in the face of fascism, especially given the prohibition placed on American jazz in occupied Europe. Significantly, Welles does not restrict the screen portrayal of these dialogues to the physical locus of power and influence (the presidential Catete Palace, in the case of "Jangadeiros," the bullring in "Bonito," or the London concert hall in "The Story of Jazz"), which would have been a familiar move for a contemporary propaganda film to make, as borne out in the Departamento do Imprensa e Propaganda documentary of the *jangadeiros'* arrival in Rio. Instead, he seems to insist that, to appreciate the novelty and historical weight of this dialogue, we must come to know the marginal subjects within their geosocial contexts of origin.

This move goes beyond a mere quest for "authenticity" or the emulation of Flaherty's ethnographic approach to documenting life at foreign locations. It effectively enlarges the social scope of the dramatic action as well as the historical frame of reference for the implied spectator, at the risk of increasing the gap experienced during projection between the actual viewer and the screen protagonist. From all appearances, this gap would have been partially closed only through structural and rhetorical strategies of "equivalence" between different halves of the hemisphere, or by Orson Welles's planned narration. With *It's All True*, Welles seems to be arguing that the benefits obtained by Americans during the New Deal of the thirties can and should be

extended to other hemispheric zones: socioeconomic justice does not have to be detained because of the war. Moreover, the mere fact of transforming what are marginal subjectivities in contemporary social terms into filmic protagonists works to reintroduce ways of life and strands of historico-cultural knowledge that have also been marginalized and silenced within Hollywood cinema and U.S. public discourse.

Finally, the twin themes of power and marginality carry metaphoric weight in relation to Welles's own liminal positioning as a filmmaker vis-à-vis the Hollywood industry—as an artist with (ostensibly) extraordinary privilege who nonetheless rapidly experienced a loss of autonomy along with institutional marginalization for using that privilege to test the limits of industrial working ideologies, including its modes of representing subaltern subjects. This perspective is reinforced by the insights into the process of American urbanization that would have been provided by many of the scenes cut from *The Magnificent Ambersons*, not to mention the completion and release of *It's All True*. With the jeopardization of both projects, partly in response to Welles's evident concern for social issues and commitment to artistic freedom, Welles's mediation through the use of his own body and voice became a means of lending coherence to the work in progress as a facilitator of inter-American dialogue, and of ensuring its very survival in later works after its suspension. Other authorial strategies that lend textual coherence, as well as forge articulations between the work in progress and the contemporary cinematic intertext and its audiences, are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Labirinto

The Politics and Poetics of a Text-in-the-Making

As long as I am alive, and if, as they say, this movie is going to be authentic, it seems to me that I ought to play the part of myself.

LILLIAN HARDIN ARMSTRONG, quoted in "Lil Armstrong Snubbed by Hollywood!"⁴

A film is only really good when the camera is an eye in the head of the poet.

ORSON WELLES¹

If *It's All True* had been completed by Welles in the early forties, how might it have compared, formally and ideologically, with other wartime films developed by the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) and the Hollywood studio system to improve inter-American relations? How might the two-and-one-half-hour feature in four parts have appeared to hemispheric audiences immersed in nationally oriented, genre-based cinemas?² What kind of evaluation can be made of the film's cultural politics based on the interaction of director, collaborators, and subjects during shooting, and in light of contemporary models of documentary film practice, as well as current notions of documentary ethics?

While it is impossible to reconstruct the public reception of a film that was never released, it is not too far-fetched to speculate on the intertextual niche *It's All True* might have inhabited, based on what is known of the work in progress, the impressions made on those participating and observing its production, and the prevailing historical and environmental factors that impinged upon the filmmaker's choice of strategies. What I seek to construct here is a virtual yet stable space within which to contemplate and retrospectively evaluate Welles's existing choices of style, structure, and subject matter in dynamic comparison with films that, in crossing the hemisphere, shared its cultural and political moment.

Along the northeast coast of Brazil there is a type of lace, which, like *almofala* lace, was brought by the Portuguese, then eventually taken up by women in the fishing colonies as part of their daily labor for hire. In this type of lace, or *labirinto*, the pattern emerges not from the joining together of threads but

from the spaces created by their absence, as holes are poked with needles and the threads pulled across the muslin that has been stretched and stabilized by a wooden frame (see fig. 30). The *exotext*, or text-by-implication, of *It's All True* resembles *labirinto* in that it defines the text based on its absence from, and aesthetic and ideological friction with, its surrounding moment in film history, while delineating its intertextual ties to works by Welles and others. By bringing the film back into a synchronous relationship with surrounding cinematic practices and intertextual zones of influence (to use Barbara Klinger's formulation) the *exotext* provides a "freeze frame" of its degree of compatibility with the evolving film culture in each of its national contexts of production and anticipated release.³ The *exotext* can thus be compared to the protective (because already exposed) "rind" of the text, whereas the prospectively oriented *endotext* (leading up to 1946) is the "pulp" containing the seeds. Diachronically speaking, the *exotext* is the "scar tissue" that has formed between the work in progress and the "real" of the film's suspension. The "whole" text is still only available to us at the spatiotemporal vanishing point where the deductive operation of the *exotext* and the inductive operation of the *endotext* theoretically join, a point where the absent author and the hypothetical spectator are also to be found, since each plays a role in the reconstructive process.

In focusing our attention on the multiple cultural, aesthetic, and strategic attributes of the *endotext*, the *exotext* simultaneously delves beneath the surface aspect of the film and points beyond the text itself to highlight the permissible limits of inter-American dialogue on film, along with the technical and ideological parameters of documentary expression as it traveled across geopolitical boundaries to fulfill wartime policy directives. The lines of intertextual affinity and tension vary from episode to episode, as production circumstances changed and Welles's own interpretation of inter-American relations evolved; each episode invites a consideration of a different body of film practice: "Carnaval" urges a comparison with the Good Neighbor musical as well as the Brazilian *chanchada*, whereas "My Friend Bonito" prompts reflection on popular Mexican genres addressing similar subject matter, as well as on the foreign interpretations of Mexican life given by Sergei Eisenstein in *¡Que Viva México!* and by Herbert Kline in *The Forgotten Village* (1941). Each of these intertextual counterparts tugs the evaluation of the *endotext* in a different direction, providing the requisite tension (and, occasionally, friction) for the *exotext* to come into relief.

Beyond the clues it gives to the shape and durability of inter-American cinema, the *exotext* touches on some lingering questions raised in previous chapters: (1) in what ways, and to what extent, did the state (as contrasted with the film industry) define and constrain the latitude of authorship in hemispheric cinema during World War II? and (2) how was this authorship expressed in different *types* of documentary practice, with the essay format,



Figure 30. Dona Aninha makes *labirinto* lace in Santa Terezinha, Fortaleza, Brazil, 2003. Photograph by Enrico Rocha.

along with dramatic reenactment, standing out as the primary means whereby Welles exercised his prerogative in this domain? Thus, the project of textual reconstruction becomes joined to the causality of the film's suspension, explored further in chapter 6.

What specific criteria and "frames" of inquiry should guide these textual comparisons? In each of the key domains with which *It's All True* was in conversation—Good Neighbor feature films, Anglo-American war propaganda, and Mexican and Brazilian national cinema—the cultural and political stakes

placed on achieving modernity in dynamic tension with authenticity were sharpened by the war's global impact on the balance of power (within and among nations), labor relations (in the face of the pressure to sustain technological progress and industrial output), and national self-image (implying which sectors of the population could and should "count"). More specifically, documentary pioneer John Grierson has commented on a growing "battle for authenticity" in the field of documentary beginning in 1938, with the advent of war propaganda.⁴ This "battle" stemmed partly from the fact that authenticity is a quality that is culturally, as well as subjectively, determined, and this determination can only be partly achieved by comparing screen representations with the "facts" of reality.

For dominant U.S. film interests, the question arose as to just how much authenticity in representation was "necessary" without jeopardizing existing distribution possibilities nationwide, since displacement to actual locations was costly, and, as some industry observers remarked, the "bulk of the income" for studio films was still to be found north of the Rio Grande.⁵ In Latin America, meanwhile, the drive toward modernization coincided with the Axis interest in expanding westward countered by a strong rhetoric of sovereignty that invoked the protective terms of the Monroe Doctrine, while recalling the noninterventionist stance taken by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the early thirties. Given the unequal rhythms of development and available capital for investment, North versus South, there was a question for Latin countries of just how much modernity, from what source, and on what terms.

In the cinema, the desire for authenticity, in tandem with cultural sovereignty, not only encouraged the development of "national genres" that sought equivalence with, rather than total independence from, Hollywood genre cinema (so that they were paradoxically informed by its mode of production); it also fueled government-backed legislative initiatives to protect domestic film industries from foreign competition. In Brazil, this took the form of Law Decree Number 21240, signed by President Vargas at the end of January 1939, guaranteeing the screening of at least one Brazilian feature per year in commercial theaters; in Mexico, it entailed added support for the capitalization and stabilization of the film industry through the creation in April 1942 of the Banco Cinematográfico with central government support.⁶ There are also signs that Latin American governments were attempting to impose taxes on the remittances of the profits of U.S. studios to the United States.⁷ Thus, the cinema played a strategic role on *both* fronts, as a sign to Latin America of the U.S. concern with improving representation and, presumably, growing interest in what that region had to offer culturally, as well as economically; and as a sign that Latin governments were delivering modernity to the general population, even in advance of basic modern conveniences in outlying areas.

The struggle for and over authenticity in cinematic representation also

indicated that certain sectors of the film audience were no longer willing to accept the status quo. Just as, since the early thirties, Latin American audiences and governments had attempted to place limits on the liberties taken by Hollywood with the stereotyping of Latin American cultures and peoples, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) opened up a public discussion of the qualitative, as well as quantitative, deficiencies in African American screen representation at a time of national mobilization.⁸ Of particular concern, beyond the chronic problem of caricature and the reiteration of the “plantation model” of racial hierarchy (strongly reflected in characterization, dialogue, and the positioning of actors in diegetic space, if not always narrative setting),⁹ was the repeated neglect in newsreels of African American contributions to the war effort, with the *March of Time*’s “The Negro Soldier” (dir. Stuart Heisler, 1944) providing one of the glaring exceptions.¹⁰ In its counterpropaganda, and its own policies in the occupied territories, the Axis took full advantage of the threat to Latin sovereignty posed by the neocolonial power to the north, as well as the social tensions caused by the persistence of the color line in the United States.

The challenges for Welles and company of navigating among these conflicting national agendas while staving off the infiltration of Nazi propaganda are reflected in the crisscrossed patterns of the exotext of *It’s All True*, indicating its combination of ideological and rhetorical conformity with Rockefeller and Roosevelt’s inter-American project, with meaningful departures in style, substance, and sociocultural positioning from the range of inter-American screen representations then in circulation. The tensions generated by this combination should not be excluded from causal arguments surrounding the film’s suspension.

GOOD NEIGHBOR PRACTICES

During most of the OCIAA administration between 1940 and 1945, the cinema was part of a “relay” system, whereby film footage would be shot and gathered in Latin America, assembled, narrated, and printed in the United States, then shipped back to Latin America for exhibition as part of a package deal, including the exportation of basic film technology. Some OCIAA live-action documentaries, especially those of Willard Van Dyke and Julien Bryan, championed the processes of modernization taking place on Latin American soil. In so doing, they fulfilled two OCIAA propaganda objectives: first, and most manifestly, to portray the Latin American impetus to travel the road to socioeconomic parity with the United States, while avoiding Axis interference and enticements to trade—hence the region’s worthiness of U.S. partnership and support in the face of the war; second, and concomitantly, to demonstrate the degree to which U.S. scientific know-how and tech-

nology were essential to Latin American progress—thereby ensuring that the United States would remain the stronger partner and supplier of finished goods for the long, postwar haul. The latter message was conveyed directly through “authoritative” practical advice given in omniscient voice-over narration (as in Walt Disney’s animated shorts linking modern farming, sanitation, and cooking methods to basic hygiene and disease prevention), and indirectly, through the on-screen portrayal of U.S.-trained professional elites (Pan-American “role models”) who return to their home countries to introduce new production methods and perspectives on development, as in Bryan’s *Fundo in Chile* (1949) and the 1943 wraparound script for “My Friend Bonito” (Welles’s hosts in Mexico are two young Mexicans from an hacienda-owning family who are returning to Mexico after receiving their college education in the United States). Even the studio-produced “Good Neighbor” features—mostly musical comedies—depicted Latin American characters (played by both Anglo and Latina/o actors) at the fringes of the “American way of life.” In musicals, this induction is achieved either through the tourist trade at points south (Havana, Rio, and Buenos Aires, for example) or through the showcasing of new talent on swanky stages in major U.S. cities (a role often reserved for crossover stars Carmen Miranda, Rita Hayworth, Cesar Romero, and Xavier Cugat).

Whereas the documentaries produced by the Motion Picture Division and destined for distribution within sovereign Latin American nations propagated the notion of advancement through consumption and application of U.S. know-how (implying the growing accessibility of these benefits to the majority of the population), the fiction films often imposed invisible boundaries on socioeconomic assimilation and improvement for Latina/o characters, even though—and partly because—the U.S. rules of screen segregation along racial lines (in effect since *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and strengthened after the enforcement of the Production Code in 1934) were relaxed for the phenotypically “light” Latina/o actors. The incorporation of these actors into key positions within the plot paved the way for heterosexual romance and displays of eroticism, providing the shorthand for symbolizing hemispheric cooperation. Exhibition venues also differed across modes of expression, in accordance with the targeted audience: Good Neighbor features relied on existing commercial 35mm exhibition circuits, a good part of which were owned by the studios or their corporate parent organizations and were located in urban centers where they were accessed by working-class as well as middle- and upper-class patrons; most documentaries and animation shorts were distributed preferably in 16mm for educational use in both Latin America and North America, and were designed to accommodate lower literacy levels in rural areas. *It’s All True* represents something of a hybrid, as its plans for distribution followed those of *Saludos Amigos*, which was released theatrically, North and South, then traveled the 16mm circuit.

Within this relay system, then, the cinema acted as both diplomatic tool and material harbinger of modernity, bringing rural areas into an imaginary synchrony with national and cosmopolitan centers of power and influence and paralleling the state-sponsored building of roads, and the expansion of aviation routes and telephone and radio service. Notwithstanding the romantic interludes and the rhetoric of reciprocity, within the bilateralist approach to inter-American exchange developed by the OCIAA, Latin America was to remain primarily a consumer, rather than supplier, of modern goods including finished films, which, when nationally produced, tended not to reach the northern part of the hemisphere. The caps on North-South reciprocity are explicitly stated in OCIAA documents and are allegorically expressed in Good Neighbor musicals: in Disney's *Three Caballeros*, Carmen Miranda's sister Aurora, ethnically cross-cast as a Bahian street seller, has plenty of delicacies to offer Donald Duck from the tray poised on her head, yet he has little to give in return save a few catcalls and tips of the hat. Frequently taking shapely, feminized form on the Good Neighbor screen, Latin America tends to distract and befuddle North American efficiency and rationality, which must be restored, albeit mollified and rendered more sympathetic, by plot's end.

Overall, Welles was more assertive than his compatriots in depicting modern change inside Latin America. In addition to the thematization of "thresholds of modernity" mentioned in chapter 4, *It's All True* also showcased signs of modern progress, with its portrayal of rail transportation between the bull hacienda and Mexico City, the aircraft announcing the arrival of the *São Pedro* in Guanabara Bay, and the Cassino da Urca flaunted as the paragon of international, as well as modern Brazilian, entertainment in "Carnaval." The first two examples are embedded in the journey of provincial people to the nation's capital—a spatialized teleology of modern conversion—whereas the last provides a common space in which hemispheric solidarity can be celebrated. Also included in Welles's inscription of modernization was the incorporation of communications media into everyday life: radio is shown in "Carnaval" as one modality in which the samba can be diffused and enjoyed, while referencing Welles's offscreen channel for communicating directly with audiences in the United States. In the early dialogue portions of "Jangadeiros," where the *jangadeiros* are "interviewed" by the press, newspapers provide a vehicle not only for announcing the *jangadeiros*' arrival in Rio but also for integrating the *jangadeiros* as citizens into the modern nation-state.

As "soft-core" propaganda, the documentary travelogues, animated educational shorts, and Good Neighbor feature films contrasted strategically and symbolically with the "hard" propaganda being churned through the Office of War Information (such as the *Why We Fight* series), the Army Signal Corps (animated shorts featuring familiar cartoon characters), and the West Coast studios in the form of melodramatic "combat" films. In contradistinction to

hard propaganda, which also sought to entertain (especially through animation and/or a realistic sound track), the Good Neighbor propaganda featured seemingly effortless travel across geopolitical boundaries (often by airplane, in peaceful skies), a wealth of natural resources being made available to a ration-bound U.S. population, and placid coastlines inviting newcomers from the North to savor sunshine, exotic-looking edibles, talented entertainers, and new dance steps: a welcome respite from the images of broken bodies, cheap liquor, soggy cigarettes, pitiless heat, and bomb-ridden beaches of the Philippines or the North African desert battlefields.

Latin-induced eroticism, which, paired with sensory exoticism, reached its apotheosis in Technicolor films such as *The Three Caballeros*, which boasts Donald Duck's incessant flirtations with the local, unchaperoned señoritas and senhoritas of Mexico and Brazil, and *The Gang's All Here*, with its excess of giant fruit props, live monkeys, and a beaming, gyrating, imaginatively festooned Carmen Miranda flanked by a bevy of "brown-skinned" and barefooted maidens. The feminization and soft-pedaled racialization of Latin America in these films, conducive to a voyeuristic, eroticized gaze, formed a psychoaesthetic complement to the masculinization (through acts of emotional contrition, bodily violence, and dismemberment, not to mention an abundance of projectile weaponry in the form of tanks and B-52s) as well as the expeditious (yet hardly innocuous) racialization of Asians and occasionally Germans, both military and civilian, in hard propaganda, exemplified in Capra's *Why We Fight* newsreels, Ford's *Battle of Midway*, and Tay Garnett's *Bataan* (1944). Thriftily filmed mostly in black-and-white, the hard propaganda is marked by what Bill Nichols has called the "endangered gaze,"¹¹ where the play between on-screen and offscreen space often supersedes the action at screen center: it's what you can't see that will hurt you.

Two aspects of the dichotomization of wartime propaganda along East-West and North-South axes contrast with Welles's approach to *It's All True*: the anchoring of both types of gaze—sensuous/voyeuristic and endangered/identificatory—in the North American spectator; and the clear distinction between color stock, associated with the depiction of an innocuous cross-cultural imaginary (or with the humorous depiction of the minor trials of war on the home front), and black-and-white, which, during the war denoted proximity to the historical real and a filtering of factual information through various "discourses of sobriety,"¹² whether scientific, journalistic, governmental, or military in character. By contrast, and barring the 1943 wrap-around narrative for the film, the ideal spectator for *It's All True* could just as easily be a resident of any Latin American country, a North American woman as well as a Latin American man. This nonspecificity of cultural and gendered spectatorship is reinforced by periodic shifts in focalization, especially in the Brazilian episodes, together with Welles and company's choice of alternative focalizers (mostly actors unknown to U.S. audiences).

Although most actors (Bonito, Chico, Miguel, Pery, Othelo, Manoel Jacaré, Manuel Preto, Jerônimo, Raimundo Tatá, Sobrinho) are male, this in itself breaks with the dominant tendency in industry films to feminize Latin America through the spectacle of female talent and their consorts. Meanwhile, the use of Technicolor to depict the entry of the *São Pedro* into Guanabara Bay in “Jangadeiros” defies the conventional distinction between color versus black-and-white film stock. Welles uses color in the context of aesthetic realism to reconstruct and reenact actual events, whereas the extensive use of Technicolor on location in “Carnaval,” including in scenes staged as “authentic” reenactments, inevitably departs from the carefully coded uses to denote mood and social or moral status in Hollywood genre cinema.

For most North Americans during the war, thanks to special radio programming and Good Neighbor musicals, Latin America was experienced mainly through its music, especially popular dance forms such as the rumba, the samba, and the bolero. The prominence of mostly musical performers within the “Carnaval” mise-en-scène and the attention devoted on the sound track to longtime popular favorites (e.g., “Carinhoso”) and top Carnival hits directly address that demand. However, Welles also made a concerted effort to link vernacular forms (such as the samba “jamming on the hill”) to more nationally mainstream (the Teatro Municipal samba band), international popular forms (the big-band sound of Ray Ventura), and hybrid classical forms (Chávez and Villa-Lobos), thereby carefully avoiding the essentialization or conflation of different genres and national sources of Latin American music characteristic of countless Good Neighbor musicals from *Down Argentine Way* (dir. Irving Cummings, 1940) to *Copacabana* (dir. Alfred E. Green, 1947).

Like the Good Neighbor travelogues, *It's All True* was to transport U.S. spectators to distant settings where they could vicariously witness crafts and rituals that were at the core of local and national life, and which the “locals” obligingly shared with foreign cameras. Given the wartime restrictions on foreign travel, however, most travelogues—and their fictional counterparts—offered visions of cultural consumption that could be experienced by most viewers only after the war's end. For the time being, cultural introductions in Good Neighbor propaganda films were to serve as object lessons in American citizenship, broadly defined, gently intervening in the flow of spectacle to keep the spectator connected, if ever so faintly, to the historical real that shaped and was being reshaped by the new inter-American paradigm. This didacticism took the form of explicit illustration and argumentation, employing a list of “do's” (adoption of modern methods) and “don'ts” (current “folk” practices) as in Walt Disney's *Cleanliness Is Health* (1943) and *Winged Scourge* (1944), or, alternatively, mimetic exercises for North Americans to learn to dance, romance, and dress the “Sous American way.” Altogether, the North-South exchange of knowledge and body postures spelled a peaceful blend

of sensuality, involving surrender to one's "instincts," and industriousness, fueled by rationality (see fig. 31).

MODES OF CULTURAL TRANSLATION

In his self-designated position as hemispheric mediator, Welles exceeded the efforts of his Good Neighbor colleagues in translating what most U.S. viewers (in particular) might have considered "strange," "quaint," or "primitive" into more familiar terms, by carefully situating the subject matter in active relationship to its distinctive geocultural and social contexts. This applies as much to the New Orleans and Chicago portions of "The Story of Jazz" as it does to the Latin American episodes. Significantly, these contexts are as much urban and regional as they are national, in direct contrast to Disney's *Saludos Amigos*, which does not differentiate within, but among, nations to the south. However, as in *Saludos Amigos*, which transforms the Texan cowboy Goofy into an Argentinian gaucho and pairs the flat-footed Donald Duck with the debonair carioca parrot Zé Carioca, one notes throughout *It's All True* rhetorical strategies of cultural equivalence that were either to be spoken in dialogue and voice-over narration or to result from the audiovisual montage of recorded material and the larger structure of the film. Samba music is compared to jazz: in a treatment for "Carnaval," the subdued, turn-of-the-twentieth-century *chorinho* form is described as a cross between ragtime and "cool jazz piano";¹³ and in one of the screenplays, an hacienda owner comments that Mexico City is no more the "real Mexico than New York is the real United States."¹⁴ In a self-reflexive moment, Harry Wild, first black-and-white cameraperson for "Carnaval," compares Rio's Carnival to "all the New Year's Eves that ever were. . . . It's Fourth of July multiplied by a million."¹⁵

More than a convenient diplomatic tool, the rhetoric of cultural equivalence in *It's All True* promotes a sense of similarity between historical trajectories and modern dilemmas across the Americas while underscoring the need for Americans to respect their differences. Previously invoked in the public rhetoric of the Monroe Doctrine, this common basis of experience is to inform the wartime goals of combating the socioeconomic and ideological challenges to hemispheric democracy, while celebrating diverse forms of cultural production. Just as important, Welles shows these cultural forms to be vulnerable to conflict and change, rather than simply presented, as in many OCIAA travelogues, as frozen in time and ripe for the picking by the U.S. tourist. In many OCIAA shorts, an equation is presumed between simplicity of representation and the effectivity of the message, leaning more toward advertising, rather than educational, discourse, thereby maintaining the hierarchical flow of knowledge and the power to cinematically represent, from North to South. This emphasis is challenged by Welles when he inscribes the U.S. tourist as a neophyte in need of education and wields different



Figure 31. Advertisement for Walt Disney's *Saludos Amigos* in *Variety*, 1942. Used with permission of and copyrighted by © Variety Magazine, owned and published by Cahners Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier, Inc. All rights reserved, and may not be modified, resold, sublicensed, or disseminated further without express written permission. Any commercial exploitation of this content is strictly prohibited and infringers will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

modes of narration and representation to underscore the depth and complexity of phenomena that are best explained by endogenous, rather than foreign, experts.

Compared with Zé Carioca's body-cued dance-painting "Aquarela do Brasil" ("Brazilian Watercolor") in *Saludos Amigos*, Welles's "genealogy" of samba, pursuing it from the neighborhood location where it is rehearsed to its showcasing for an international audience at a picturesque Rio setting, points to the centrality of ritual processes as a means of contextualizing new cultural information, without the folklorization that results from excessive mediation and directorial control. At the same time, and in keeping with the OCIAA's ostensibly progressive developmentalist focus, Welles appears to have recognized the glaring geosocial disparities in gaining access to information via media technologies, feeding on regional and class differences in culture and education. Hence the inclusion of different speech genres and modes of presentation in the film, from popular song lyrics, oral testimony, dance and capoeira, Afro-rooted percussion, religious pageantry and prayer, eulogy and community debate, to didactic voice-over narration, spontaneous documentation, even animation, to reach as many different constituencies as possible. This marks a departure from the Good Neighbor features and travelogues, which champion national popular forms (in which Latin rhythms and lyrics are often *folded* into a swing band framework) and the filtering and smoothing of vernacular forms for re-presentation as folkloric elements (as in Disney's engagement of professional Argentinian dancers to perform traditional gaucho dances in *Saludos Amigos*).

Just as important, there is a contrast between Welles's film and the bulk of Good Neighbor travelogues in the degree of mediation, which remains in tension with the possibility of self-representation, even though the state of technological development still limited access to screen self-representation, especially on the sound track, for films shot on location. Welles's introductions in the wraparound screenplay are confined to segues: he rarely lets his narration interfere with the inner flow of the diegesis, preferring to let the material—songs, gestures, characters' emotions, artifacts, land- and cityscapes—speak for itself, whereas Disney's voice-over narration in *Saludos Amigos* (and in *South of the Border with Disney*, 1941) is almost continuous, entering into direct conversation with, and cuing, the animated material. As Mary Ann Doane has noted, voice-over narration builds on the spectator's "desire to hear," and, in contrast to synchronous dialogue and voice-off (a character speaking offscreen), it constitutes the spectator "as an empty space to be 'filled' with knowledge about events, character psychology, etc."¹⁶ The heavy reliance on authoritative voice-over in the travelogues thus encourages a unilateral transmission of knowledge along a North-South axis, rather than a multilateral, dialogical approach to exchange and transmission

among protagonists and spectators of various sociocultural backgrounds and nationalities, as in *It's All True*.

DOCUMENTARY INTO FICTION

A story in which people themselves will play the drama of their own lives.
Mercury publicity document¹⁷

Ana López has perceptively analyzed Hollywood's depictions of Latin America during this period as a form of ethnography, defined as a "historically determined practice of cultural interpretation and representation from the standpoint of participant observation," rather than as "a positivist methodology that unearths truths about 'other' cultures."¹⁸ Within such ethnographic constructions, whether fictional or documentary, the images generated of Latin America tend to be hybrid in composition, in that stable North American representational forms (or at the very least subject positionings) have been joined to shifting Latin American content, which, even when empirically grounded, takes on the characteristics of the exotic, of that which "remains different, beyond familiarity."¹⁹ From this standpoint, an equivalence, if not exactly a blurring of differences, was established during World War II between documentary and fictional modes of discourse, each of which incorporated ethnography, spectacle, Good Neighbor rhetoric ("Americans all"), and an invocation of "discourses of sobriety" as tools of cross-cultural representation, albeit with different professional aims, at different venues, and with different audience responses in mind. This blurring parallels, and indeed reinforces, the slippage between vernacular and "folkloric," popular and mass cultural forms that were being not only depicted but also *shaped* by these films, as evidenced in the highly performative, screen-inspired self-constructions proffered to the tourist trade in postwar Latin America.

To guard against this slippage, Welles kept the boundaries among different cultural forms distinct, while encouraging their interaction within and across the episodes. Moreover, the fictional sequences in most soft propaganda act as a buffer against the "real" or boring aspects of Good Neighbor exchanges—Alice Faye yawns when she is introduced to the Cuban cane fields (documentary footage shown in a matte process shot) in *Weekend in Havana*, preferring to seek out the romantic prospects at local nightclubs where she finds the entertainment (Carmen Miranda and handsome suitors) that will help the Good Neighbor medicine go down. In contrast, in *It's All True*, fictional strategies are developed as a conduit for bringing the foreign viewer into more intimate contact with the documentary subjects.

Thus, Welles's fictionalization of events within familiar generic formats such as the "coming-of-age" story, the musical, or the epic is used not only, as Mercury publicity material stated, to increase the film's entertainment

function and value but also to encourage an empathetic disposition of the viewer toward protagonists of different nationalities, classes, and ethnic backgrounds. Through fictionalization, Welles is able to flesh out his cast members as individual characters so that they will not be lost to anonymity in larger, speechless groupings. Disney also sought to develop individual characters to narrate his animated travelogues. However, in sharp contrast to these characters—an airplane (Chile) and a parrot (Brazil) in *Saludos Amigos*, and a rooster (Mexico) in *The Three Caballeros*, alongside Donald Duck and Goofy—Welles does not encourage the subliminal objectification of human subjects through the anthropomorphization of animals and machines, nor does he introduce familiar icons, other than himself, from the United States in Latin American settings.

In *It's All True*, new insight into foreign contexts is provided by focalizing the action through protagonists, or actor/translators, who have intimate experience of those contexts in actual life. This strategy can be traced back not only to the documentaries of Robert Flaherty (whom Welles considered to be the “pioneer” of documentary) but also to British documentarian and critic Paul Rotha, who proposed in 1938 that more attention be given in documentary to the human individual.²⁰ Welles conveys the importance of Flaherty's technique in his recollection of having seen *Nanook of the North* when he was eight years old:

Eskimos no longer seemed remote creatures who existed in the half-world of semi-fiction along with centaurs and unicorn but were real living human beings like myself, and by natural progressive induction my young mind was automatically conditioned to the probability that all people everywhere were apt to have basic human traits very similar to myself and Nanuck [*sic*]. What I'm trying to say is that *the psychological factors involved in the documentary film, can form the thought processes of a nation as readily as that of an individual.*²¹

Yet, in developing individual characters in *It's All True*, Welles made two important departures from existing Good Neighbor and documentary practice, including Flaherty's films. First, in sharp contrast to the Good Neighbor features, which relied on U.S. stars and cross-cast secondary actors, Welles chose to work with nonprofessional actors in key roles to provide texture to the depiction of stories based on lived experience. Second, through the focus on ritualized activity shown in both reenacted and directly documented form (the samba practice and processions in “Carnaval,” fishing and the division of the catch in “Jangadeiros,” and religious observance prior to the bullfighting ritual itself in “Bonito”), he rejoins the “fictionalized individual” to the social and national collectivity, thereby increasing the synecdochal value of the characters and the symbolic reach of the plot.

These moves echo the fictional experiments in Mexico of Fred Zinnemann in *Redes* (*The Wave*, 1934) and of Herbert Kline in *The Forgotten Village*, while

anticipating the work of Italian neorealists such as Lucchino Visconti (*La Terra Trema*) and of Latin American filmmakers who adopted neorealist strategies in their fictional films in the fifties and early sixties, notably Nelson Pereira dos Santos (*Rio Quarenta Graus/ Rio, Forty Degrees [Celsius]*, 1954, *Rio Zona Norte, Vidas Secas*, 1963), Glauber Rocha (*Barravento*), Anselmo Duarte (*Pagador de Promessas/The Given Word*, 1962), and Paulo César Saraceni (*Porto das Caxias*, 1962) in Brazil; Tomás Gutiérrez Alea and Julio García Espinosa (*El Mègano*, 1955) and Humberto Solás (*Manuela*, 1966, and *Lucía*, 1968) in Cuba; Luis Alcoriza (*Tiburóneros/Shark Fishermen*, 1962) in Mexico; and César Enríquez (*La Escalinata*, 1950) in Venezuela.²² The renewal of neorealist efforts in the United States, notably by Herbert Biberman in the dramatic reenactment of a miner's strike in New Mexico (*Salt of the Earth*, 1953) should also be mentioned as hypertexts of *It's All True*, especially of "Jangadeiros." Welles's attention to the plight of the subaltern subject and, through her or him, to social tensions and conflicts arising from the abuse of power or structural inequalities, doubtless appeared to be making a symbolic dent in the representational cohesiveness of the nation-state, a cohesiveness that was of paramount value to mainstream fictional and documentary cinema throughout World War II.

Produced during the preceding period, *Redes* and *The Forgotten Village* are important aesthetic and strategic precursors to *It's All True* and thus provide insight into its fissuring as a wartime text. As a fishing film, *Redes* shows the mark of an Eisensteinian aesthetic (Zinnemann scrawled "Eisenstein's Cossacks" on the back of a production still in reference to the choreography and visual composition within the shot),²³ combined with Flaherty's production techniques (Zinnemann referred to Flaherty as his "professional godfather"),²⁴ echoing *Man of Aran* by casting members of a small fishing community near Veracruz. It bears links through photographer Paul Strand to the New York Film and Photo League,²⁵ and it prefigures the grass-roots struggles for basic labor rights and compensation portrayed in "Jangadeiros" and Rocha's *Barravento*, shot on the same beach where Welles shot the romantic idyll between Francisca and Sobrinho (see fig. 32). Hence *Redes* is directly expressive of the genealogical web that Welles cultivated during his theatrical work in New York and early days in Hollywood, and that deeply informed the strategic and aesthetic design of *It's All True*, situating it on the cusp of the thirties and forties. It also represents the kind of longitudinal shooting and direct referencing of socioeconomic exploitation that began to wane and, in some cases, was actually censored during the war (see chapter 6). Zinnemann reported that the original negative to *Redes* was burned upon being discovered in Paris by the Nazis.²⁶

The Forgotten Village, filmed in the village of Santiago in the Sierra Madre of Nuevo León, Mexico (today a tourist location), the same year that the Bonito shoot began, also features a young indigenous protagonist who makes



Figure 32. Frame enlargement from *Redes* (*The Wave*); director, Fred Zinnemann, 1934. Courtesy Filmoteca de la Universidad Autónoma de México, Mexico City.

the trek to Mexico City to bring back the serum that will put a stop to the typhoid epidemic that has killed his brother. Scientific methods win out over traditional medicine in the end, with the “enlightened” indigenous character emerging as the (narrative’s) hero, and, like Chico in “My Friend Bonito,” symbolizing the next mestizo Mexican generation, proud of its roots yet embracing modernity.²⁷ The film’s stylistic and strategic resonances with *Redes* are no coincidence—Herbert Kline was a member of Paul Strand’s Frontier Films, John Steinbeck wrote the screenplay, and it was shot by Alexander Hackenschmied (aka Hammid), who also shot the daring anti-Nazi war documentary *Lights Out in Europe* (1940) for Kline and was experimental cinematographer on Maya Deren’s *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943) and *At Land* (1944).

In contradistinction to these realist experiments, which often emphasize the viewer’s immersion in the diegesis at the expense of an awareness of the locus of articulation (the “author” or institutional apparatus), Welles maintains an element of self-reflexivity in his film by adopting the essay format

he had perfected in radio. This format binds the episodes together within a single narrational scaffold while providing a measure of distance from undistilled state discourse (i.e., converting the film into a “propaganda machine”) by clouding documentary claims to transparency (generally still very much in force despite the palpable on-screen evidence of mediation), on one hand, and softening (if not undermining) the iron grip of genre—especially ethnocentric notions of genre—on the representation of “other” cultural phenomena, whether mainstream or vernacular, on the other. As Timothy Corrigan notes with respect to the format in general, “[A]s a film text geared to the possibilities of ‘public expression,’ [the essay film] falls between the categories of public realism and formal expressivity, and so becomes a critical wedge within the very idea of filmic categorization.”²⁸

CANNIBALIZATION VERSUS CARNIVALIZATION OF GENRE

Within the Hollywoodian wartime context, Welles was hardly the first to calibrate audiovisual style and *mise-en-scène* to create a self-conscious fusion and contrast among different genres. The MGM wartime musical *Meet Me in St. Louis* (dir. Vincente Minnelli, 1943) experimented successfully with shifting tones and styles of performance to embed “horror” and “musical revue” formats within the basic framework of family melodrama. The choice of actors (such as the multitalented Judy Garland) and thematics (aging and generational differences in tandem with seasonal and modern technological changes) provided the motivation for such hybridity, as did the heightened studio consciousness around gender differences within the film audience. More broadly, generic mixing can be seen as a trademark of modern Hollywood cinema at moments when it has needed to reinvent itself and keep its viewers guessing, especially during periods of high output and scaled-down resources, such as World War II.²⁹ Yet this cannibalization of genre and culture within individual texts has rarely disturbed the overall coherence and intelligibility of the “matrix genre” of a given film, or the lack of ambiguity in distinguishing commercially among audiences (home front, battlefield, “black,” “white,” Latinoamerican), viewing optics (endangered/paranoid/sensuous), and the primary functions (information/sublimation/distraction) of wartime genres.³⁰ A case in point is the negative reception on the part of RKO executives in spring 1942 of *The Magnificent Ambersons*, which, like *Meet Me in St. Louis*, was set at the turn of the century, yet as a melodrama did not originally end on an upbeat romantic note, nor did it champion the future of modernity: *Meet Me in St. Louis* ends with a unified, multigenerational, and heterosexually paired family, marveling at the electrical display of the St. Louis World’s Fair of 1904. Moreover, with its chiaroscuro lighting, lonely, impotent characters, and prevailing tone of melancholia, *The Magnificent Ambersons*—an “A” film by Hollywood standards—borders on the

sociocultural sensibility and preoccupations ordinarily reserved for “B” product, as in the emerging film noir cycle, a boundary that Welles delighted in crossing.

Across the hemisphere, the integrity—if not purity—of genres can be seen as a vital means of “taming” and encoding foreign material so that it conformed to familiar national cultural terms. For example, the musical can be seen as lending itself to the management of sociocultural crises brought on successively by the Depression, World War II, and women’s entrance into the labor force, as well as the growing migration of people “of color” (Latinas/os as well as African Americans) into U.S. cities, whereby it was refurbished and refreshed by new themes, settings, and types of performers. One of the effects (and sustaining features) of Hollywood’s global hegemony has been an increased familiarity and fascination with its generic formats by transnational audiences, to the point where Hollywood genres become adopted, albeit in modified form, as vehicles of expression for other national cinemas, as was the case to some extent in both Mexico and Brazil during World War II. Hence, an imbalance in generic influence—interpreted by some Latin American critics as a sign of U.S. imperialism—has prevailed alongside the lack of reciprocity in the flow of documentary images.

By contrast, Welles’s mixture of genres (ethnographic film and travelogue in the realm of documentary, and the musical, rural comedy, epic adventure, and melodrama, in terms of fiction) in *It’s All True* foregrounds the role of form and voice in the narration of history, thereby problematizing the documentary-fiction relation, a relation that is glossed over or side-stepped in Good Neighbor features and documentaries. In so doing, Welles relativizes models of cinematic representation—consider the contrast within *It’s All True* between the austere epic (“Jangadeiros”) and the baroque musical (“Carnaval”)—thereby placing Latin American film industries on a par with that of the United States as a source of generic inspiration. Thus, “My Friend Bonito” contains links to *comedias rancheras* and bullfighting melodramas, as well as the Mexican indigenist melodrama (such as *Maria Candelaria*) of the thirties and forties, and “Carnaval” resonates with the Brazilian version of the musical revue, or *chanchada*. Each of these genres can be seen as presenting hybrid solutions to the challenge of launching a modern, nationally oriented cinema in these countries, melding endogenous cultural forms and talent (as in *It’s All True*) to transnational strategies and genres of cinematic representation, while tailoring those strategies and forms to meet local needs. For example, the *comedia ranchera* can be interpreted as a variation on the “singing cowboy” genre of the thirties adapted to the dilemmas posed for many Mexicans by rural-urban migration.

The power of generic appropriation in relation to the building of national sovereignty should not be underestimated: Brazilian *chanchadas* were frequently marked by “hybrid parody,” poking fun as much at the illusions and

delusions associated with modernity in a “less-developed” setting, even as they used mimesis to undermine the power of U.S. film culture, thereby transforming the metropolitan model into an object of humor,³¹ following the theory of cultural cannibalism (gaining strength by “ingesting” one’s enemy) advanced by the modernist generation of the twenties and thirties. Mexican cinema took its own stabs at hybrid parody, although this strategy grew in importance in the postwar period with screwball comedy/*cabaretera* films starring Tin Tan (Germán Gómez Valdés Castillo) and his multitalented, international cohort of costars, epitomized in *¡Ay, Que Bonitas Piernas!* (*My, What Pretty Legs!*, 1948), which features a young Spanish flamenco dancer, a Brazilian samba singer, and Cuban performer Ninón Sevilla, with her Afro-Cuban entourage.³² Just prior to the shooting of “My Friend Bonito,” the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is reported to have screened a “satire on bullfighting,” which exceeded box office records in Mexico City and whose title, *Ni Sangre Ni Arena* (*Neither Blood, Nor Sand*, dir. Alejandro Galindo, 1941), causes one to question the reporter’s claim that the film was “not a parody” on the recently released Hollywood melodrama *Blood and Sand*, starring Rita Hayworth and Tyrone Power (dir. Rouben Mamoulian, 1941).³³ This signals the way in which popular U.S. film genres were actually developing in dialogical relation to, and competing for the same audiences as, national film genres south of the Rio Grande—especially in the areas of bullfighting and the musical—a dialogism that Welles wished not only to capture but to accentuate as the project evolved.

The blending of these genres in *It’s All True*, together with the fusion of documentary with fiction, was not without its social and political risks in these national contexts. In each country, film genres were linked to the project of nation building, as well as to the construction of the popular imaginary within permissible (i.e., politically manageable) boundaries. “My Friend Bonito” shares with the *comedias rancheras* and bullfighting melodramas its setting in the Bajío, the central cattle-grazing zone around the state of Jalisco where La Punta is located, along with the imprecise temporality (up until the final bullfight) of the *comedia ranchera*, increasing the mythic value of the story. It also resembles Fernández’s then-emerging indigenist melodramas in creating the image of native Mexicans as a nonthreatening presence in relation to the Mexican state (in sharp contrast to the indigenous-based insurrections of the Mexican Revolution or the Chiapas-based rebellion at the turn of the twenty-first century).³⁴ Yet it lacks Fernández’s self-conscious references to the spatial marginality of Mexican indigenous subjects, as well as the centrality in the *comedia ranchera* of heterosexual romance, tempered by familial and related (*compadrazgo*) ties and musical interludes. As a result, the episode opens up a discourse on ethnic and social difference that, by the time of the war, was being kept within safe bounds on the screen, overdetermined by the conservative modernism of the patriarchal wartime state

(which could be why transgeneric hybrid parody, of the sort indulged in by the unruly Tin Tan, was deferred until the postwar period).

Likewise, “Carnaval” shares the choice of musical talent and revue format of the contemporary *chanchada*, which, in true carnivalesque fashion, allowed for gender inversions and a moderate amount of interracial contact (which was often defused by becoming the object and conduit—as Grande Othelo quickly learned—of humor). In the satirical *Alô, Alô Carnaval* (*Hello Carnival*, 1935), directed by the head of Cinédia Studio, Adhemar Gonzaga, and featuring many artists who would appear in Welles’s “Carnaval”—Chico Alves, Linda Batista, Benedito Lacerda and his regional band—we repeatedly see homosocial pairings (rather than groupings) of performers, a modicum of cross-dressing (Carmen Miranda and her sister Aurora appear in glittering *pants suits*, à la Marlene Dietrich), and open references in the comic repartee to homosexuality. This and other *chanchadas* were much more restrictive in their staging than “Carnaval,” however, and they tended to stick to a vaudeville format of presentation (ironically offset by the art deco set design) owing to the modest technical resources at the producers’ disposal. Thus, in breaking out of the standard static camera-facing-the-proscenium format, Welles’s “Carnaval” was able to cross racial and class boundaries inscribed in the urban geography, visibly grounding the musical performances in local history and introducing a mode of social integration that up to that point had been witnessed and experienced only during live Carnival, *not* on the screen. Through “Carnaval,” Welles pushed the *chanchada* genre further into the sound era, notwithstanding his fascination in “Jangadeiros” with silent visual aesthetics.

On the other hand, just as the casting of a mestizo boy at the forefront of a bullfighting melodrama, thereby inscribing a kind of indigenist discourse in “My Friend Bonito,” might have been seen as overstepping social and cultural boundaries drawn within Mexican commercial cinema (although the bullfighting profession did provide an avenue for socioeconomic mobility for many working-class and mestizo young men, such as Fernando López and Armillita), the casting of Grande Othelo as “Carnaval’s” lead character, rather than inveterate sidekick (the preferred role for Afro-Brazilians in *chanchadas*), broke with Brazilian cinematic convention. Inside Brazil, the lens would not be widened on the urban sociogeography of Rio in a fictional narrative until the midfifties, introduced in the neorealist films of Nelson Pereira dos Santos.

Beyond these “unsettling” fusions, there are also what can be described as carnivalesque inversions of genre in relation to casting and setting: while broad sectors of national societies can take part in the film’s “happy endings” (a “must” for Hollywood Good Neighbor films of the forties), “tragedy,” as Welles demonstrates in *It’s All True*, need not be reserved for characters who are socioeconomically privileged—thereby challenging established def-

initions of who was worthy of being considered “noble” by birth, and thus worthy of the genre.³⁵ Similarly, as an epic adventure film, “Jangadeiros” confers the heroic stature usually reserved for Euro-American protagonists upon *caboclo* members of a remote coastal community. (Sharing a similar ethnic background to *jarocho*s in Mexico, in Brazil, *caboclos*, which include most of the *jangadeiro* community, are the descendants of indigenous peoples, African slaves, and European settlers—mostly Portuguese—combined. To viewers of the film footage back in Hollywood, they were alternately identified as “Indian” or “black.”)

The effectivity of these metatextual inversions can only be assessed when placed in narrative and sociocultural context, however. Mexican critic Alejandro Rosado has remarked that the element of tragedy in Golden Age films, especially those of Emilio Fernández, that depict the struggle of humble *indios*, played by Dolores del Río and Pedro Armendáriz in “brown-face,” against the entrenched structures of age-old oppression in the postrevolutionary period has the countereffect of weakening their agency in provoking social change (a power that is ultimately relegated to the paternal state), while encouraging conformity with the modernization model set in place by the Partido Revolucionario Institucional government.³⁶ One objection that might be raised against “My Friend Bonito,” based as it was on a short story rather than on direct observation, is that, just as Bonito is pardoned by the Mexican president (Avila Camacho), Chico’s shock of entry into cosmopolitan modernity is softened by the wise counsels of the avuncular, more assimilated Miguel, the bull trainer, whose job it is to facilitate Chico’s socialization in a nonindigenous universe, as much as it is to prepare Bonito for the ring. In this way, the plotline echoes the paternalism of the state toward indigenous people.

Nevertheless, within the nation-bound hemispheric universe of the early forties, the hybrid patternings of genre across the film’s episodes potentially disrupt the notion of culture as a stable system, along with the value placed on purity in artistic production and historical narration. These attributes bring the project of *It’s All True* into alignment with the progressive aesthetics of what can be termed the “social modernism” of the thirties (whether in its neorealist or documentary variants) and, by extension, with the aspirations and formal practices guiding what would come to be widely known as “third cinema.” For example, in his reflections on film reception, Cuban filmmaker and theorist Tomás Gutiérrez Alea remarked:

[When] basic genres, distinct but complementary, get seen at one sitting . . . viewers can experience distinct levels of mediation which bring them closer to or farther away from reality and which can offer them a better understanding of those levels of mediation. This play of approximations . . . doesn’t always have the greatest coherence or reach the greatest level of “productivity,” because viewers then usually are seeing works made independently of each other. . . . Nevertheless, this possibility of mutual relations throws light on what could be

achieved . . . , even if we are considering just the *framework of a single film*, in the elaboration of which the filmmaker has kept in mind this whole range of *levels of approximating reality*.³⁷

THE FOUR-PART STRUCTURE

A picture about the people of the Americas for all the people of the Americas.

ORSON WELLES³⁸

When one considers the cinematic precedents for a multipart narrative structure prior to *It's All True* (contrary to the claims of Mercury's synopsis, it was not the first film to use such a structure),³⁹ one finds that there is nothing inherent in the basic form to produce an alternative aesthetics and politics of cross-cultural representation in the Americas. Yet, by serving as a grid for stylistic and spatiotemporal heterogeneity, the dynamic four-part framework did (and continues to) open up possibilities for the type of authentic representations being hoped for by Latin Americans, as well as the intercultural articulations being stressed by the Good Neighbor Policy. In contradistinction to the dialectical structure of Eisenstein's *¡Que Viva México!* with its sharp contrasts between indigenous and Spanish-influenced cultures, and its referencing of violent encounters between these cultures in Mexican history (in apparent contestation to the then hegemonic ideology of *mestizaje*), and to the linear, compartmentalized structure of *Saludos Amigos*, where there is little thematic or characterological continuity across the Bolivian, Chilean, Argentinian, and Brazilian episodes—save the reappearance of Donald Duck and the documentary portrayal of Disney's artistic team at each stop—Welles opted for a more fluid and egalitarian relationship among the episodes, bringing distinct contexts into dialogue with one another. This was achieved through geographic and aesthetic contrast and thematic and structural resonance, so as to conjure forth a political discourse of “unity founded on difference,” inviting a Bakhtinian reading of contents.⁴⁰

Each of the film's episodes could easily have functioned as a separate utterance in its own right—as a discrete unit of compositional structure, visual (and, where developed, aural) style, with historically grounded themes.⁴¹ Yet they function just as effectively as integral parts of a shifting, composite whole, through which larger rhetorical patterns and production strategies come into view that together position and reposition the endotext in relation to its surrounding intertext and transnational sponsors. As Welles explained: “This is a picture divided into several parts. It is not, however, an arbitrary selection of short subjects, nor is it vaudeville. This is a new sort of picture. It is neither a play, nor a novel in movie form—it is a *magazine*.”⁴² Within this “montage framework,” the episodes come to be defined through their *interdependence*, which is alternately characterized by the dynamics of

contrast, fusion, repetition, complementarity, juxtaposition, and displacement weaving through the internal components of audiovisual aesthetics, theme, plot structure, and characterization. For example, in “My Friend Bonito,” the paradigmatic journey from village to city can be seen as ending in an emotionally surprising, if not radical, departure from the expected telos of the bullfight, whereas the movement from favela to city in “Carnaval” similarly culminates in the child’s wish coming true (Pery is about to find his mother), but also in the bittersweet note of an acknowledgment of Jacaré’s disappearance (foreshadowed by Othelo’s return to his everyday, street self). This, in turn, punctuates the successful completion in “Jangadeiros” of a heroic quest coupled with real-life tragedy, swerving away once again from the attainment of a predictable telos.

The city symphony concept introduced in “Carnaval” easily inspires a symphonic reading of the episodes in relation to one another, especially given the plans for carefully selected and modulated local sound track material. Moreover, in focusing on the possibility for social, regional, and even class- and state-related conflict and change, as the characters and the collectivities they represent take risky steps into cosmopolitan modernity, it can be noted that Welles proposes a range of denouements. Scanning the endotext, one finds (1) reconciliation through an observance of ritual, assigned a national rather than ethnic status (“My Friend Bonito”); (2) reconciliation through ritual inversions and transpositions, along with an assignment of democratic aspirations to an essentially nondemocratic form of government (“Carnaval”); (3) reconciliation through interregional dialogue and peaceful popular protest, assigning the exercise of citizenship rights to the *jangadeiros* and civic responsibility (requiring a correspondence between deeds and actions) to President Getúlio Vargas (“Jangadeiros”); (4) reconciliation through marital union, assigning a sense of community and family responsibility to Nick and Delia (“Love Story”); and (5) reconciliation through the acceptance of vernacular and popular (New Orleans-based, Chicago-inflected African American) music by postclassical, modernizing Euro-American and European critics and audiences (“The Story of Jazz”).

This textual interpretation within a multipart narrative grid is encouraged by the diachronic transition from a somewhat arbitrary ensemble of self-contained episodes in the North American version linked by three themes—the narrativization of historical experience through credible characters, the dignity of labor, and diversity as a foundational principle of American culture, the plots of which unfold mostly within a restricted time frame (or are heavily marked by ellipses); to an ensemble, post-1941, of interlocking episodes set in different corners of the hemisphere, the events of which collectively cover a long time span from the colonial occupation of Amerindian lands to the present, yet are thematically weighted toward the wartime conjuncture. Hence, mythic time comes to be combined in the film with an

acute sense of contemporaneity. In their display of popular access to the national seat of power, their celebration of autochthonous cultural practices, not to mention of social dialogue and ethnic diversity at the core of national societies, the episodes address—both allegorically and in self-conscious narration—the political and cultural stakes attached to the deflection of the Axis threat to the Americas from *multiple* viewpoints.

If the episodes are too brief individually to warrant much plot development (as contrasted with Welles's first two feature films), the film's macro-structure permits an extension of emplotment that not only supports the expression of Welles's baroque sensibility but also reinforces the presentation of culture as a porous and malleable process that evolves in its social foundations and outward manifestations with each significant shift in the geo- and sociopolitical balance of power. Such shifts prompt migrations—of artists and media crews South and North, of the poor to the city, of ideological factions in and out of alliance within national governments, of discriminated populations into more tolerant territory. These migrations, Welles correctly demonstrates, and as Michael Curtiz's *Casablanca* (1942) so eloquently illustrated, were part and parcel of wartime modernity. Welles and team were acutely aware that, sent to Brazil in the midst of just such a shift, they themselves became the harbingers of cultural change. Hence the concerted attempt to strike beneficial working relationships with their creative counterparts within each national setting.

In formal terms, the four-part structure, together with the film's generic and stylistic hybridity, shifts in style, language, and locale, and layers of narration (intradiegetic and extradiegetic), reinforces the film's open discursivity, as contrasted with an open *text* (vanguardist, unresolved story, downplaying the historico-cultural needs of the addressee) or closed text (containing unambiguous narrative closure, prescribing historico-cultural interpretations to the addressee, as in *Saludos Amigos*). As Richard Neupert observes, in an open discourse film, "a film may continue after the story is resolved, and it will necessarily include images and/or sounds, but the material used will not constitute a new complete story nor will it complete earlier action."⁴³ One issue that might have been resolved in postproduction is precisely how Welles planned to make the transition between episodes so as to avoid the sense that a "new complete story" was beginning at each juncture.

Finally, Kathleen Newman has noted that Chicana/o film and video, in providing spatial and bodily metaphors for the social marginalization and disenfranchisement of that community, have contributed to a "reterritorialization of our [the U.S.] nation-state."⁴⁴ When translated into a grid for cross-cultural representation, the four-part format of *It's All True* prompts a move in the endotext away from a bilateral, intergovernmental model of trade and exchange, and toward a plurivocal, heterological, yet hemispheric (and therefore counterhegemonic) framework of cultural expression and

communication. This framework adumbrates, then and now, a cultural, epistemic, and political reterritorialization of the hemisphere, as the flow of representational discourse is precociously disengaged from a predominantly North-South axis, so as to tap into two geocultural flows that had been obscured by political and trade relations along the Euro-American axis: an Afro-diasporic flow, connecting the African continent and the Caribbean with other parts of the Americas, which has overlapped with the legacy of Iberian colonization in Amerindian territories in the New World. Thus, hemispheric audiences can be educated not only about the modern, new (pan) American “way” but also about a wealth of knowledge and tradition stemming from Afro-diasporic and indigenous communities—a move that, in 1942, raised the specter, at RKO, of “national susceptibilities” in inter-American representation:

In almost all of the Latin American countries—naturally more so in some countries than in others—in which the mixture of white and Indian blood is apparent, this fact is not denied but it may at times even be a cause for boast. However, this is the case only within each country, among its own people, and any reference to the matter by a foreigner causes irritation and unpleasantness. . . . THEREFORE, IT IS BETTER TO PLAY SAFE AND ALWAYS AVOID ANY REFERENCE TO MISCEGENATION AND EVEN OMIT PICTURE SEQUENCES IN WHICH MULATTOES OR MESTIZOS APPEAR TOO CONSPICUOUSLY.⁴⁵

LABOR AS CINEMATIC SPECTACLE

Brazil is a Democracy in a hemisphere of Democracies, and among the Democracies neither peonage nor starvation need be tolerated by free men.

ORSON WELLES⁴⁶

Physical labor was very much at the center of state-sponsored documentaries in thirties Britain and the United States, where independent filmmakers could pursue agreed-upon themes at large with funds from the Department of Agriculture and the United States Film Service. Labor was equally central to the nationalist film propaganda issued by the Brazilian Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda (DIP) under Getúlio Vargas’s Estado Novo, albeit lending a paternalistic gloss to the notion of citizenship and achievement of modernity in a less than “functional democracy.”⁴⁷ In *It’s All True*, coming on the heels of these trends, the theme of manual and artistic labor resides at the crux of the achievement of modernization and the safeguarding and transmission of vernacular culture, laced with doses of cultural performance and leisure, a mixture that contributes to the film’s lyricism. Brazilian scholar Tunico Amâncio recently pointed to the departure of Welles’s depiction of human productivity in “Jangadeiros” from the standard Eurocentric vision of “lazy natives,”⁴⁸ such as the “brown” maidens lounging on

the “beaches” of Busby Berkeley’s soundstage in *The Gang’s All Here*. This focus on labor, while relatively absent in relation to the human subjects of Disney’s travelogues (in *Saludos Amigos*, Pedro the anthropomorphic airplane from Chile works up much more of a sweat crossing the Andes than any of the Argentinian gauchos, *cholas* in Bolivia, or Brazilian cariocas), was *key* to documentary images of Anglo-Americans of different classes and genders during the war (whether in manufacturing or in the military). Thus, it functions in an important way to produce channels of identification, rather than voyeuristic forms of spectatorship, between North American and Latin American audiences.

In most wartime documentaries, a harmonious relationship was being discursively established between labor, modernity, and the state, as had been done in the thirties, especially in works by John Grierson and his General Post Office and Empire Film Board units (Britain) and Pare Lorentz (United States). Although the “happy endings” of “Jangadeiros” and “My Friend Bonito” in *It’s All True* suggest the reconciliation of artisanal labor with the modern state on its path to democratization, there are enough signs, already noted earlier, that Welles was prepared neither to fully embrace this modernity as author nor to posit a single Euro-Americocentric model of modernity as the most desirable telos for Latin American societies.

Welles’s skepticism toward the pace and form taken by modernization and its alleged promise for hemispheric labor emanates as well from his effort to place individual laboring subjects in the foreground of the *mise-en-scène*, a gesture that is repeated in each episode with the branding of the bull, the samba school, the building of the *jangada*, and the women dyeing their husband’s fishing clothes and making lace on the beach. The embodiment of the historical real in the artisanal actions of characters set within a fictional narrative causes his film to depart from the “esprit de corps” model of Anglo-American social documentary, in which the workers depicted remained voiceless and nameless, even as their laboring bodies and, on occasion, faces were registered in close shots (as in *Night Mail*, and *The Plow That Broke the Plains*, dir. Pare Lorentz, 1936). It also introduces a point of contrast with the films of Robert Flaherty, equally bent on portraying the artisanal activities of individual characters, and providing a frame of reference for some of the visual compositions in “Jangadeiros” and “My Friend Bonito.” None of Welles’s plotlines seem to suggest the possibility of a return to pristine, premodern conditions, as in *Nanook of the North* and *Man of Aran*. Instead, modernity *enters into* tension with the rituals of the vernacular and must be confronted before any reconciliation can be reached between opposing forces.

Welles’s overall ambivalence, rather than conformity or open resistance, toward American-style progress throughout the hemisphere is manifested in the quasi-melodramatic turning points in the plots of the episodes, where the plight and resistance of subaltern characters is exposed, thereby pro-

viding an additional source of fissuring within the exotext that may not have gone unnoticed by officials of the DIP and OCIAA. Moreover, in each of the Latin American episodes, with the exception perhaps of “Atawallpa,” an element of ritual linked to artisanal modes of production and social communication is welded to a social drama that transcends the historico-culturally or socially determined space(s) inhabited by the community in question. This contributes to the cohesiveness of the multipart film and calls attention to deeper sources of conflict brought on by modernity and their means of possible resolution.

According to Victor Turner, social dramas tend to involve four distinct phases: a “*breach* of regular norm-governed social relations made publicly visible by the infraction of a rule ordinarily held to be binding,” followed by a “*crisis*, when people take sides, or rather are in the process of being induced, seduced, cajoled, nudged, or threatened to take sides by those who confront one another across the revealed breach as prime antagonists.”⁴⁹ These two stages are followed in turn by “the application of *redressive or remedial procedures*” and “the reintegration of the disturbed social group” or “the *recognition and legitimation of irreparable schism [sic]* between the contending parties.”⁵⁰ These phases of social drama are unmistakably present in “Jangadeiros,” in which the death of the *young* fisherman leaves an impoverished bride to her own resources and brings the social inequities among *jangada* owners, fishmongers, and fishermen into relief, prompting the journey to Rio, where the fishermen are granted inclusion in the national social security legislation (see fig. 33). The same phases are allegorically rendered in “My Friend Bonito” in the trials of Chico and Bonito on the way to Mexico City, followed by the reconciliations between the indigenous and the Spanish, and the rural and the modern in both the Zócalo Cathedral and the bullring. In “Carnaval,” the building of the Avenida Vargas through Praça Onze threatens the existence of informal samba exchanges in the urban public sphere, so vital to the development of Carnival hits and to the popular (with a small *p*) celebration of Carnival in an unofficial urban site, thereby implying the possible *exclusion* of this community from the local and national processes of modernization. In all cases, the community (synecdochally embodied in Chico, the four *jangadeiros*, and Grande Othelo) seeks the “application of redressive procedures,” then (indicating a sensitivity to how the democratic stability of Latin American allied governments was at a representational premium) the crises end with the national “reintegration of the disturbed social group.”

The combination of ritual with the element of social drama in different episodes introduces a tension between cyclical and teleological orientations in historical narration, and between stability and social change in Latin American societies, each of which encourages different readings of the film’s ideological leanings and opens different possibilities for the dynamics of cross-



Figure 33. Frame enlargement: *jangadeiros* of Fishing Colonies Z-1 and Z-2 in the “Meeting” scene of “Jangadeiros.” Courtesy Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan. Note the resemblance in shot composition with that of the frame enlargement for *Redes* in figure 32 (page 209).

cultural spectatorship. The progression into social drama and the continuation of the theme of labor and justice suggest an attempt to transfer some of the values associated with 1930s social documentaries to the rapidly evolving context of inter-American representation. While such a transition appears to have occurred successfully in Britain in the propaganda films of Humphrey Jennings (a good example is the appreciation of firemen’s contribution to the war effort in *Fires Were Started*, 1943), that is, within the same national context as before and applying technological improvements so as to increase the self-representation of the film subject, there is little doubt that the U.S. state and film industry were resistant to the ideological implications of a wholesale transposition of pro-labor discourse—not to mention self-representation in the absence of state mediation—to the sphere of international relations.

There was, then, more paradigm shifting than continuity within the general body of Atlantic documentary during the war, a process that has been compellingly described by Swiss filmmaker and critic Hans Richter as a par-

allel shift from “dramatized history,” exemplified in the work of Flaherty and Lorentz, and from “social document,” exemplified in the work of Joris Ivens, to “political documentary” (respectively), which in turn alternately took the form of “essayistic film,” “public information medium,” and “propaganda film.”⁵¹ As an interstitial text, *It's All True* can be seen as straddling the distance both between “social document” and “dramatized history” (albeit weighted toward the latter), and among the three variants of “political documentary,” weighted toward the “essayistic film.” This positioning simultaneously lends it discursive openness and richness and tugs at its ability to achieve legitimacy in the eyes of the state.

On the other hand, Welles's ambivalence toward the Euro-American influence in Latin American modernity, the value placed on “deep history” and culture in each episode, and the pluralistic approach to democratic participation suggest an alignment with the first wave of modernism and realism in Brazilian literary production, thereby anticipating the echoes of the latter in the Cinema Novo.⁵² This line of affinity creates a measure of distance between *It's All True* and its contemporary cinematic intertext linked to the various institutional habituses (national film industries and state apparatuses) in Brazil, Mexico, and the United States.

Several geosocial concerns and aesthetic tendencies in Welles's film had already been taking shape in the northeastern realist novels of the thirties. The combination of stark, mimetic portrayals of regional culture (including the incorporation of colloquial speech) with the commitment to social change in these novels might well have attracted Welles's sympathy in the same way that it attracted the belated attention of Cinema Novo auteurs, such as Nelson Pereira dos Santos, thirty years later. The novels of Jorge Amado and Graciliano Ramos provided source material for several of dos Santos's films. From Amado, dos Santos adapted *Tenda dos Milagres* (*Tent of Miracles*, 1977) and *Jubiabá* (1987), and from Ramos, the groundbreaking *Vidas Secas*, which helped launch the “aesthetic of hunger” associated with the second period of the Cinema Novo.⁵³ Dos Santos's *Memórias do Cárcere* (*Memories of Imprisonment*, 1984) was inspired by Ramos's unvarnished recounting of his March 1936 imprisonment by the Vargas regime for his political views.⁵⁴

There are resonances (if not a proven hypotextual relationship) from the new northeastern literature to be found in Welles's visual and narrative attention in “Jangadeiros” to the tasks and dangers associated with *jangada* fishing, the Homeric struggle against the natural elements, the inequitable division of the catch between *jangada* owner and *jangadeiro*, and the *jangadeiros*' decision to “migrate” to Rio to improve their conditions. One sees in the weathered faces and the stalwart, proud, yet God-fearing character of the barefoot *jangadeiros*, the screen precursors to the *retirantes*, or rural migrants in *Vidas Secas*, and to Mr. Ramos's prisonmates in *Memórias do Cárcere*, who have withstood so much physical suffering and social injustice that they

have little left to lose, except to undertake peaceful protest against the age-old and materially enforced powers that have intensified their misery and despair. Crucially, under the watchful eye of the Estado Nôvo, there was no screen equivalent in Brazil (beyond the timid *A Jangada Voltou Só*) for this literary practice, which itself was subject to harsh censorship.

A TRANSCULTURAL EXERCISE, NOT A COUNTERETHNOGRAPHY

The discursive fissuring evidenced in the exotext of *It's All True* was not merely elective, or authorially induced; in some ways, it was exacerbated, if not immediately caused by, international developments in film production and distribution at the time of shooting. Notwithstanding Welles's "goodwill" in using the shoot to assist with fortifying the Brazilian film industry (for example, the Mercury/RKO team introduced the latest methods of sound recording at Cinédia, where the Vitaphone disk method was still in use), national filmmaking sectors in the hemisphere were in direct competition with one another. In addition to the OCIAA's efforts to stimulate the Mexican industry at the expense of the Argentine industry, owing to the lack of Argentine support for the Allied effort, the national film industries in Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina were being consolidated and expanded with local state support, fueled by the growing popular disenchantment with the Spanish-language versions of Hollywood films circulating in the thirties, along with misguided Good Neighbor experiments.⁵⁵ These efforts at expansion were occurring at precisely the time that Hollywood and the OCIAA were avidly courting Latin American markets for U.S. product. Thus, in the same issue of a contemporary film journal, such as *A Cena Muda* (Brazil) or the New York-based *Cine Mundial*, one might find a layout of Joan Crawford modeling her personal wardrobe or the results of a South American Diana Durbin "look-alike" contest interleaved with editorials on the crisis of national cinema and the need for more protectionist measures on the part of the state, along with the occasional promotion of feature films from Axis countries (especially Germany) and their protofascist allies (such as Spain or Argentina).

Beyond the subjacent struggle for control over the long-term "goods" of hemispheric trade, including the power to represent one's culture beyond national boundaries, the definitions and stakes placed on modernity and authenticity, although equally intense across the region, were and still are culturally and ideologically inflected "ideals" that cannot be measured according to any universal standard. For many ethnic and disenfranchised communities whose paths have crossed the film screen, "authenticity" refers to the fidelity of the film image, in appearance and density of information, to historical events *as experienced* by the community in question, along with the degree of narrative focalization and other avenues of expressive agency accorded to members of that community. It was in this context, bolstered by

the existence of mounting community protest against the film industry, that Lil' Hardin made public her objection to being excluded from the cast of "The Story of Jazz" during its planning stages. Was the substitution of Hazel Scott for Hardin detrimental to the narration of Armstrong's actual experience, which was to form the focus of the episode, or did it merely sacrifice an element of that experience for a "creative mimesis" that would provide a credible "illusion" of the young Hardin while permitting (potentially) a wider diffusion of the film by using a more "bankable" star with crossover potential?

Jesse Rhines has pointed out how, even with the ethnic community as the ultimate frame of reference, authenticity is a relational, historically contingent concept. He cites (as if in response to Hardin's complaint) Talmadge Anderson's criterion of the ability to "reflect the condition and experience of African Americans in relation to the broader society and the world," as contrasted with Jean-Paul Sartre's stress, with regard to the "authentic Jew," on the assertion of one's "claim in the face of the disdain shown toward him."⁵⁶ Both of these definitions can be seen as applying to Welles's choice and treatment of characters and settings, as well as to plot motivation and action in *It's All True* (such as in "The Meeting" scene of "Jangadeiros"). Such a relational approach carries a higher risk, in actual practice, than the "safe," generically coded representation that keeps the subaltern comfortably within their "own" restricted space, since it is not likely to let either the film-going audience or film industry executives—especially those showing disdain for subaltern populations—off the hook.

Latin American-rooted discourses of authenticity, such as could be found in the Mexican and Brazilian film industries, worked to promote cultural sovereignty by arguing for the orientation of entrepreneurship, casting, and narrative setting in a national popular context. Crucially, these nationalist cinematic discourses—and *It's All True* weighs more toward the Latin end of the balance—tended to define authenticity in terms of "cultural specificity" (rather than fidelity to lived experience), the lack of which was a major complaint leveled against the Latin American-laced and marketed U.S. features owing to their habitual confusion and conflation of Latinoamerican languages, accents, and identities. Meanwhile, the stress on cultural sovereignty helped to mask racial and ethnic tensions *within* national societies and, by extension, cinemas, through the unifying discourses of *mestizaje* (in Mexico) or of racial democracy, respect for the working class, and modern progress (in Brazil).

As the Lil' Hardin controversy illustrates, the question of authenticity intersects with the larger project of axiographics, which Bill Nichols has defined as "an attempt to explore the implantation of values in the configuration of space, in the constitution of the gaze, and in the relation of observer to observed."⁵⁷ To Nichols's evaluative criteria can be added the

configuration of auditory space within the text and the constitution of the “captive ear” (as an auditory equivalent of the “gaze”) in relation to the image and recorded events, although such an evaluation relies on the completion of a film’s sound track, which is absent from the work of *It’s All True*. As Barbara Klinger has suggested, it is best not to try to adopt a unified position from which to evaluate this textual inscription of values: “The aesthetic or political value of a film is no longer a matter of its intrinsic characteristics, but of the way those characteristics are deployed by various intertextual and historical forces.”⁵⁸

Thus, while on the one hand, one can see how Welles’s desegregation of screen space, use of convergence editing, placement of nonprofessional actors in the foreground, and assignment of speaking parts to politically and cinematically disenfranchised actors all seem to speak to the strengthening of sociocultural authenticity in axiographic terms, his realist-driven choices have also yielded mixed reactions, including among today’s film critics. The late Mexican film historian Emilio García Riera objected to what he perceived in “My Friend Bonito” (albeit based solely on Higham’s account of the footage in *Sight and Sound*) as “one more version of a bucolic and primitive Mexico (children, animals, nature, rituals, photogenic clouds) so dear to ‘civilized’ boredom, even taking into account how someone as respectable as Welles was behind it.”⁵⁹ Several Brazilian film critics, meanwhile, have lauded Welles’s promotion of Grande Othelo at the center of Carnival revelry (replete with children, rituals, and photogenic views of the “marvelous city”), even though, without the film’s release, Othelo’s elevated status during shooting was prevented from having a lasting impact on his career.

An equally pertinent question revolving around authenticity and the ethics of image-making concerns the working relationship obtaining between filmmaker and subject, the filmmaker’s treatment of the filming location during the production process, and how that comes to shape what is *omitted* from, as well as what is inscribed in, the space of the film.⁶⁰ Compared with axiographics, this leads to a different conclusion regarding Welles’s dedication to authenticity and respect for a given community. The reason for this is simply the fact of mediation and how no filmic representation can be entirely transparent with respect to the process that generated it, a problem taken up by both Jean Rouch and Jean-Luc Godard in their experimental documentaries and fictional essays, respectively, in the sixties. Thus, if axiographics stresses the causal and formative continuity between text and context, what can be called strategic analysis, focusing on the production context points to the slippage than can occur between those domains.

On the “plus” side, in the plots of the episodes, and even within diegetic space, Welles tends (within limits) not to reduce or confine any of the subaltern or marginal communities he portrays to single tasks and vernacular modes of expression, or to a laboring engagement in artisanal, premodern

modes of survival. Instead, they emerge as dignified subjects, deserving of praise and admiration within a pluralistic model of modernity and democratization that Welles viewed as the common goal for the Americas during the war. Yet the same fictional strategies that added substance and gave voice to those who would otherwise have faded into a folkloric backdrop in a Good Neighbor travelogue produced another kind of marginalization and effacement that affects our interpretation of the places and events portrayed, as well as our ideological reading of the film's narratives.

Within each episode, the display of class and other social tensions, although alluded to in the actions and words of the protagonists, is kept safely offscreen, with the exception of the "Meeting" scene in "Jangadeiros" and the final bullfight in "My Friend Bonito." This masking is most noticeable in "Jangadeiros," where the city of Fortaleza, then the expanding capital of Ceará and a protomodern point of linkage with Rio de Janeiro and the United States, is kept at the margins of what appears to be a thoroughly pre-modern, isolated beach culture. This was no doubt a diplomatic gesture, an attempt not to mix genres and offend the sovereignty of local and national powers, keeping the DIP and its henchmen safely at bay. Yet, in so doing, some social sources of the *jangadeiros'* economic difficulties, as well as the fact of wage employment for their wives and daughters, were swept from our view. In conducting interviews with women who had participated in the film, I learned that the lace being made on the beach, as well as some of the laundry being washed within the *mise-en-scène*, was done for hire for wealthier families who lived in the city.⁶¹ More recently, Welles has also been chastised by local film critics for casting members of the Iracema fishing colony (Z-1) in a film depicting the Mucuripe colony (Z-2), which returns us to the question of sovereignty and documentary authenticity. Welles clearly depended on both his local patrician sponsors, the Pintos and Albuquerque, and on the fishing colonies for the success of the film, and this more pristine treatment, emphasizing heroism at sea, rather than tensions at home, might have been the result of that.

Although by current standards Welles may not have lived up to all the film's claims of realism and authenticity, his attempt to make a claim for modern participation and cultural preservation on the side of subaltern populations in the Americas and, more important, a claim for their cinematic enfranchisement prior to the introduction of film technologies (portable camera, synch sound) that would simultaneously give them voice as well as agency on the screen, was politically daring, prescient, and technically groundbreaking.

Chapter 6

Zoom, Pan, and Rack Focus

The Film's Suspension Examined

The arts cannot thrive except where men are free to be themselves and to be in charge of the discipline of their own energies and ardors. The conditions for democracy and for art are one and the same.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT¹

There is one thing of which you can be certain, my dear reporter: politics in Hollywood is a "jungle"!

ORSON WELLES²

Given the interstitial positioning and discursive fissuring of *It's All True* as a text, and the silences that have surrounded its unmaking as well as its making, much has to be gained historically from reopening the question of its suspension and subsequent suppression in the post–World War II period. Fortunately, Orson Welles's innovative strategies as a filmmaker and public appearances abroad were not lost on contemporary observers and institutional sponsors. Hence, it is in the labyrinth of evidence emanating from institutional archives, as well as testimonies by eyewitnesses, that the empirically grounded (or at least most plausible) causes of the film's suspension and subsequent abandonment are to be found.

Most existing explanations have searched for and presented a single target for blame, while tending to simplify or overlook the especially volatile mix of political, economic, and cultural forces that impinged upon the film's production process. These explanations have also been carried out in the service of a larger biographical or Hollywood-oriented narrative and thus in the absence of an evaluation of the actual work in progress. Here I seek a fuller explanation for the demise of *It's All True*, by magnifying the causal circuitry delineated in chapter 1, then, proceeding from the events of the suspension outward, considering various factors and triggers, ranging from those proposed by the auteur-centric arguments to those connected to institutional agendas and political-economic protagonists considerably more powerful—if less visible today—than Orson Welles (see fig. 34).

Temporally, this analysis spans the watershed period between 1939 and



Figure 34. Orson Welles during Rio de Janeiro Carnival, February 1942. Photograph by Genevieve Naylor. Courtesy Peter Reznikoff. Weeks later, a headline in Bahia's *A Tarde* newspaper announced: "he doesn't consider himself a genius, nor does he believe that within fame, lies happiness."

1945, with the second phase of the "Carnival" shoot and the beginning of the "Jangadeiros" shoot (March–July 1942) at the epicenter. This permits a foregrounding of the dynamics of cultural (and by implication economic and political) hegemony and, within those dynamics, another look at the *project* of *It's All True* as an unfolding text/event in relation to what Raymond Williams would call dominant, residual, and emergent trends in cultural production, valuation, and distribution during World War II.³ Spatially, these dynamics reach across the hemisphere—indeed, they include in their sweep

the approaches to inter-American screen representation and documentary mentioned in chapter 5. To better examine the causal vectors within author-text-context relationship, I will be zooming in on the three distinct socio-political habituses in which the production of *It's All True* was entangled: RKO in bicoastal perspective and the Hollywood film industry on the West Coast; the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) in relation to the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration anchored on the East Coast; and the Rio de Janeiro-based Brazilian Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda (DIP) with regard to the OCIAA and RKO, as well as the Brazilian press and filmmaking communities that were "relatively autonomous" to the DIP.

Although the Mexican institutional context should not be excluded a priori, I have found little evidence to suggest that it had a direct bearing on the film's suspension, especially given the timing of the Mexican episode, autumn 1941, in contrast to the summer of 1942, when most of the more drastic measures against the project were taken and the wartime alliance between Mexico and Brazil, respectively, and the United States had been formalized. Moreover, and notwithstanding the Mexican government's rejection of *The Way to Santiago* as a viable project, there are plenty of signs that Welles and codirector Foster received the full cooperation of the Mexican government, which assigned an official censor to accompany the "My Friend Bonito" shoot, yet, perhaps for the better, was not directly involved in sponsoring the production of the episode.⁴ This cooperation was obtained in part thanks to José Noriega, who, as a Mexican-born associate producer who had worked in *both* film industries, managed to smooth relations with the nationally powerful hacienda owners and obtained approval for the shoot from the film union, the Unión de Trabajadores de Estudios Cinematográficos de México (UTECEM).⁵ Nevertheless, the Mexican context retains its importance where the contrast in the institutional treatment of the various episodes is concerned, as well as the shaping of U.S. film policy toward Latin America.

Framing this causal ensemble is World War II, which had immediate and profound repercussions on the *modus operandi* and dispositions of all involved, from Welles and crew to the men in the "captain's chairs" within the different habituses. Given the logistical and strategic pressures exerted on these players in mind, it is not a matter of merely reversing the charges and blaming RKO, the DIP, or the OCIAA for dismantling the film project. Instead, I have sought out the concrete manifestations of hegemony (in the Gramscian sense of the temporary and incomplete mastery of a field of struggle) as a multidimensional phenomenon involving cultural values and agendas as well as the exercise of political power.⁶ One aim is to identify the competing discourses and ideological factions within each of the habituses, making it possible to decipher (almost in an Althusserian sense) a certain alignment of forces at work during the wartime conjuncture, which itself was

evolving in response to new modes of attack and fronts of action. Entertaining this multidimensionality of historical actors makes it more difficult to posit a single cause, either institutional or circumstantial, behind the cessation of Welles's project. For example, the DIP and, more broadly, the Vargas administration have been described by historians as susceptible to swift changes and, often, contradictory implementations of policy and modes of control, since they embodied conservative and integralist, as well as liberal, pro-Allied tendencies.⁷ It is also well known that the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration incorporated relatively conservative and isolationist elements, together with more progressive, even radical advocates for domestic social change, with the conservative forces gaining in strength during the war owing to the rightward shift of the U.S. Congress—a shift later addressed directly by Orson Welles in his newspaper editorials and radio programs.

In tandem with the effects of hegemony—and, most crucially, the ways in which it was experienced and interpreted by the twenty-seven-year-old Orson Welles while on location—I foreground the role played by political economic authorship so that, in departing from the auteur-centric model, the idea of individual agency is not entirely abandoned for what might be termed “systemic analysis.” This type of authorship constituted a privileged vehicle of political and economic agency and *representation* in the official public discourse of the thirties and forties. In the mainstream press, for example, one frequently finds the tensions among nations during the hemispheric realignment personified in the actions and character traits of male political leaders and representatives. Such authorship, moreover, is critical to understanding how the divergent factions within a hegemonic entity, such as the Estado Novo in Brazil, or the economically liberal, politically conservative Avila Camacho administration in Mexico, resolved themselves in the public spotlight and how new agendas were forged. Manuel Avila Camacho, Getúlio Vargas, Nelson Rockefeller, Franklin Roosevelt, and George Schaefer can all be seen as skillful mediators between, and beneficiaries of, competing and conflicting interests, as well as highly ambitious political-economic actors who were able to conjugate their handling of various demands to take control over valuable resources, reconfigure institutional agendas, and devise clever lines of defense.⁸ These patriarchal leaders were also, to varying degrees, in active conversation with one another during the time Welles shot *It's All True*.

In deviating from an auteur-centric model, I do not intend to entirely relieve Welles of his own agency in provoking the suspension. Through his own choice of working methods and his desire for artistic autonomy during production, he can be seen as contributing to what can be safely described as a lack of synchronization and essential cooperation among some of the international crew and institutional representatives. This begs the question of how appropriate a full industrial crew run studio-style on location was to what

transpired as a grassroots film project. To get serious creative work accomplished during the busy shoot, Welles would “escape” from his compatriots to hold late-night sessions with Brazilian colleagues, which furnished ample grist for the “tropicalist” musings of a xenophobic, dyed-in-the-wool company man such as production manager Lynn Shores. Finally, a historical and causal distinction needs to be made between the film’s immediate suspension in the early forties and its eventual suppression from the record by the end of the decade. Was this the only Good Neighbor project to become a casualty of shifting policies and priorities as the war progressed? Other factors, operating both within and outside of RKO, need to be considered to comprehend Welles’s eventual discouragement from salvaging the film, along with the prolonged “disappearance” of the footage even though it remained at the same location in Los Angeles for three decades.

TEXTUAL TRANSGRESSIONS?

Just as the text of *It’s All True* cannot be reconstructed without retracing the film’s production history, any analysis of its suspension begs a careful consideration of the reception of its textual content and shooting methods as they *were perceived* in 1942. This is the case even if Welles (and, by extension, Mercury), and not the work in progress, was the primary target of most of the actions leading to the suspension. The attribution of causal significance to the film text, fuzzy as it was in 1942, fundamentally recasts the causal debate as it has been formulated to date, since it poses the question of whether the cessation of Welles’s contract and the lack of support for the film were as much an act of preemptive *censorship* as a *reprimand* to Welles for his alleged (mis)conduct offscreen. And, because censorship is linked to competing notions of cross-cultural and national representation—or, rather, the figuration of the national *within* the rapidly growing enterprise of cross-cultural representation—it automatically raises the question of how precisely Welles’s project fit in with or departed from the agendas and expectations of the sponsoring organizations and the dominant players within them. Implicitly, there is the question of just *what* the gestation of this film, leaning toward documentary as it did, should have “looked like” in the opinion of these organizations and their representatives, in view of Welles’s diplomatic mission. This “ideal textual other” can only be deduced by examining contemporary practice, discussed in chapter 5, and by reading between the lines of institutional memos.

The witnessing and tracking from afar of a production team at work, from which creative strategies and techniques were extrapolated, did not impede the construction of a textual imaginary on the part of contemporary observers. More often than not, this imaginary construction fueled the impression that Welles’s vision of inter-American representation was diverging

from an industrial norm and the expectations of the Brazilian government. Like other “risk” factors (such as Welles’s personal or professional conduct), these textual projections—based on batches of rushes, viewed at the studio without the sound track, or on unreservedly biased reports from the production front—were highly vulnerable to interpretations mediated by “political, aesthetic and moral” concerns, which, Mary Douglas alerts us, are precisely what inform modern assessments of risk.⁹ These concerns—such as the apparent lack of spatial segregation along racial lines in Brazil (according to U.S. categories of racial difference), given the proximity between Afro-Brazilian and “white” subjects within Welles’s film frames, and the perceived tampering with “national susceptibilities” mentioned earlier—are revealed in explicit commentaries made by the political-economic authors (and their picadors) regarding the work in progress, as well as in the precise form(s) of censorship or (in)action taken against the film’s completion.

Given that the film was never allowed to materialize according to Welles’s design, there has always been ample room for self-fulfilling prophecies regarding the text. Thus far, aside from racist and (mostly unfounded) cost-related concerns (a heavily populated production number such as “Adeus, Praça Onze” = great expenditure), the arguments as to its impossibility based on its “lack of cohesiveness” have held the upper hand. Moreover, owing to the emphasis on the film’s demise in the auteur-centric accounts, the work’s evaluation has revolved around scenes that were being shot as the project began to “fail”: namely, the “Carnaval” episode, which ironically has been the most dismembered in the archives and was also the first to be viewed by RKO executives around the time of the unfortunate *Magnificent Ambersons* previews. Considerably less attention has been given to “My Friend Bonito” or to the northeastern portions of “Jangadeiros,” where Foster and Welles were each working effectively on their own with smaller crews and a much-diminished presence of the press.¹⁰ Hence, “Carnaval” has borne a synecdochal relationship, causally and descriptively, to the four-part whole. Intermingled with the perennial depiction of *It’s All True* as an inchoate and impenetrable mass have been four salient points of criticism.

No Screenplay

“No script” is an blanket term for the length of time it took Welles to develop a basic narrative structure and the virtual absence of a script while shooting “Carnaval,” as well as the improvisational nature of the shooting schedule. This perception worked as a key premise for arguing the shapelessness of the project at a late stage of production and, by deduction, the harmlessness—from RKO’s point of view—of cutting off funding and support for the project midstream. The complaint appears to have been voiced

mostly by the studio, in contrast to the DIP or the OCIAA, which were more concerned with Welles's shooting itinerary and the behavior of his crew on the ground. Lack of adherence to a screenplay pointed to a violation of studio protocols, even where the making of a documentary was concerned, and it echoes the difficulties experienced by Robert Flaherty in relation to the British and U.S. commercial film industries, as well as Darryl Zanuck's disapproval of Jean Renoir's improvisational, longitudinal method of shooting.¹¹ The resemblance in working method between Welles and these precursors has been noted by critics, such as Jean-Claude Allais: "[L]ike Jean Renoir, he [Welles] precisely does not respect *découpage*, he's an experimentalist. For *Citizen Kane*, there was only one copy of the script, and Orson changed the roles around before shooting."¹²

While the description of Welles's method as haphazard is highly questionable when applied to his oeuvre as a whole, in the case of *It's All True*, this claim indicates the studio's reliance on surface impressions of the film-making event, overlooking the many signs that a structure for the film *was* in the making during shooting. These latter include (1) the notes, synopses, and treatments for "Carnaval" that Welles submitted to RKO in the spring of 1942; (2) the exhaustive written explanations advanced by Welles and Richard Wilson for the observational approach to filming the Rio Carnival, which, like a "storm," could only be captured by fanning out the two film crews to as many urban locations as possible (which is why Welles could not have been present at each filming location), and the structuring of specific, staged scenes only after Carnival had been experienced firsthand by the principals and Brazilian experts had been consulted;¹³ (3) the fact that "My Friend Bonito" was shot according to a fully developed shooting script and Welles and Foster were in near-total agreement on how the location shooting for that episode should proceed; and (4) the fact that, prior to Jacaré's disappearance, "Jangadeiros" would have been modeled as isomorphically as possible on the experiential and geographic trajectory of the *raid*, relying on Jacaré's own diary for the narration and on Edmar Morel's treatment for historical background and socioeconomic analysis.

For RKO executives, the "risk" of no script was rooted in concerns over financial planning and control over the studio's public image and the use of its resources, independently of the logistics and cultural politics of making a documentary at a foreign location. While it aptly describes the method behind the Brazilian episodes, the following explanation by Welles while shooting "Carnaval" could easily have been misconstrued: "A script is dialogue. The Carnaval sequence contains no dialogue. A storyline requires a story. Carnaval, as we have stated, is a feature story, and a feature story can only be broken down in terms of notes."¹⁴ On the other hand, Welles's economy in shooting each take, evident in the nitrate rushes, would have been

quite difficult to accomplish if there were no editing scheme, or *découpage*, in mind. So, neither the implicit criticism of “no idea” nor reports of “excessive footage” quite hold water.

Screen Realism

A related source of objection involves the shaping of the Brazilian episodes after contemporary historical events, and not according to a “story idea” concocted a priori in the pristine confines of the studio. Although Welles’s demonstration of fidelity to these events, and to emic priorities in the reenactment of customary practices, was universally praised by leading Brazilian film critics, as well as by the communities he filmed in Fortaleza and Rio de Janeiro, it could only have knitted the brows of RKO executives, including George Schaefer, who questioned the marketability of Brazilian social reality—depicted in fine, rather than broad, brushstrokes—to U.S. audiences. Undoubtedly, it also pushed buttons at DIP headquarters, where there was a strong, vested interest in restricting and embellishing—namely, whitening and modernizing—the image of Brazilian society exhibited at home and abroad.

The objections to documentary realism in *It’s All True* are manifested at different levels and in different ways within each of the habituses. At times, the interests of the sponsoring organizations are at odds with each other. For example, the Brazilian government initially approved, indeed proposed, that the 1942 Carnival be filmed in documentary form. Much to the chagrin of RKO, this immediately led to an impression of chaos and increased the amount of footage needed for the shoot. In his perhaps overly honest production notes, “Problems of Photographing Carnival,” Welles observes: “The fundamental principle of the carnival is that it has no organization and permits no one to organize it. The distinction of the Rio carnival comes from this very disorganization, which produces the best festival in the world, and which affects the life of the whole city. The city loses its control and each individual loses his.”¹⁵ And again, in “Discussion of General Subject Matter, Tone, Aims, Etc.,” we find: “We must remind them [i.e., RKO executives] that we arrived in Rio with no knowledge of what Carnival was like, without equipment, no stars, no story. We had to shoot film from which we could make an acceptable picture. . . . Looking back on it now, I see how we could have shot only half as much film.”¹⁶

The leeway in the form of footage and time needed to refine the ultimate focus and approach of “Carnaval” was only compounded by Welles’s use of a full-fledged Technicolor crew and accompanying sound equipment. Up until, and even during, this time, most Hollywood studios used footage shot in foreign settings as background material in matte process shots, whereby the actors could appear in exotic mises-en-scène without leaving the studio.

Since such scenes did not physically incorporate the protagonists' action or dialogue, the standard practice was to shoot them in black-and-white, MOS. (In effect, as Richard Wilson has noted, RKO tried to guarantee a "return" on its investment by having Welles's second unit shoot this kind of location footage for its archive, as well as for Fox and Columbia studios.)¹⁷

In correspondence with RKO and in Mercury publicity material, Welles stressed the novelty and artistic potential of applying Technicolor and location sound recording to the Brazilian subject matter.¹⁸ However, RKO executives deemed it to be excessive and unnecessary beyond what was critical to the completion of "Carnaval." Schaefer adamantly refused to allow Welles to shoot in Technicolor in Fortaleza, presumably for budgetary reasons, and there are signs that the supply of Technicolor stock diminished considerably toward the end of the "Carnaval" shoot as well.¹⁹

For the Vargas administration, however, the Technicolor apparatus boosted the cachet of the "Carnaval" shoot as a media event and added to the authenticity and attractiveness of the projected text, which, from their standpoint, was intended to attract tourists to Brazil with dollars to spend.²⁰ The question, Welles soon discovered, was *where* to point the Technicolor cameras within the varied social geography of Rio de Janeiro. A local column complained: "*Favelas* exist in Rio de Janeiro, just as in Buenos Aires, New York, etc. However, nobody tries to make them known by means of the cinema. They are ordinary scenes, scenes existing in all countries of the world."²¹

It is difficult to reduce the debates over shooting ratio, technology, and shooting strategy—which, I have stressed, were primarily director-producer debates—to questions of sheer economics, not to mention codes of professional conduct determined a priori. Instead, these "practical" variables are tied to competing concepts of cultural, social, and racial politics as applied to cinematic representation in the hemisphere. I will briefly identify some key sources of friction in this domain.

Casting and Setting

By giving attention to performative and decorative detail in the film, Welles was able to contextualize the actions of his mostly nonprofessional actors both spatially and socially. This, combined with the ethnographic approach to the choice of subject matter, led to the display of what for observers in Brazil, Mexico, and the United States were subaltern—poor, black, mulatto, mestizo, working-class—subjects prominently in the frame.

For DIP officials and members of the carioca elite, there was a not-so-fine line in acceptability between displaying the "reality" of a yearly national celebration marked by spectacle and *communitas* (the facade provided by official Carnival and the beachfront casinos) and showcasing the threadbare prepa-

rations for that celebration in the favelas (“Ave Maria no Morro,” “Sinfonia dos Tamborins,” “Batuque no Morro,” “Carinhoso”) or the alternative popular celebration in Praça Onze. There was also a difference between showing the president’s recognition of the *jangadeiros*’ demand to be granted the status of legitimate workers, thereby contributing to the consolidation of the nation-state (as in the DIP short *A Jangada Voltou Só*) and the straightforward portrayal of the *jangadeiros*’ daily struggle to make an honest living in a markedly inequitable socioeconomic system, all to be narrated (according to original plan) by Jacaré.

The departure in *It’s All True* from Mexican, Brazilian, and U.S. cinematic norms in the *primary focalization* of the narrative, privileging subaltern protagonists over public personalities and stars, could easily have been extrapolated from Welles’s casting choices and publicity reports on the primary action of the film. As José Inácio de Melo Souza and Robert M. Levine have noted, poor people (statistically coinciding heavily with black and mixed-race people) in Brazil had rarely met the lens of still or moving cameras at close range; when they did, the DIP preferred for them to look humble and content, and whenever possible shown in the presence of an “authority figure,” such as Vargas. In *A Jangada Voltou Só*, the anonymous *jangadeiros* of Iracema beach appear in syntagmatic and choreographic, yet compositionally subdued, proximity to Dorival Caymmi, a musical star who plays a *jangadeiro* named Chico. Moreover, as de Melo Souza has noted, in DIP newsreels, the poor and disenfranchised rarely spoke, but listened—until the intrepid Jacaré broke this rule and was shown laying the *jangadeiros*’ petition on the line to President Getúlio Vargas in *Heróis do Mar*.²²

Welles’s casting of the four *jangadeiros* and his deference to their expertise and locution in the narration without recourse to a “whiter” or more conventional narrator (in the original treatment) marked a clear departure from the long-standing restrictions on ethnic and racial representation in the dominant U.S. cinema, as well as from the specifically authoritarian mold of social representation during the Vargas era in Brazilian dominant cinema. In effect, RKO employee William Gordon later opined that a film in which the “heroes on the raft are referred to as Indians” would be “impossible to sell to audiences” in the United States.²³ And, of course, Welles’s use of prominent performers, such as Grande Othelo in “Carnaval,” did little to offset the privileging of Afro-subjectivity in theme, casting, and setting. Unlike the *chanchadas*, where Othelo’s characterizations and choreography are respectful of established Brazilian social codes, Welles’s “call-and-response” editing scheme in “Carnaval” gives Othelo’s presence equal weight and places him in uncomfortable proximity to “white” performers Linda Batista and Emilinha Borba. Moreover, Othelo’s blackness, as both social identity and phenotype, is accentuated by his immersion in neighborhood *ranchos* and preparations for the big Carnival event in favelas. In *It’s All True*, Othelo is



Figure 35. Decked in *malandro* attire, Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata, aka Grande Othelo, poses for RKO's Technicolor camera on the set of "Carnaval." Photograph by Jean Manzon. Courtesy Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.

no longer a "token" black actor in a sea of relative whiteness;²⁴ rather, by openly assuming his Afro-carioca subjectivity in "Carnaval," he literally opens the stage door so that others in that community can reach the screen: black star and black extras become symbolically and spatially intertwined. In my conversations with Othelo, he expressed his gratitude to Welles for recognizing and respecting his right as an Afro-Brazilian performer to explore different facets of his identity on the film screen. As Othelo explained, even in Brazilian cinema at the time it was difficult, if not impossible, for black performers to step out of the prescribed, subordinated roles and come into their own (see fig. 35).²⁵

Although one does find occasional objections to Welles's foregrounding of black and *caboclo* Brazil in the Rio conservative press,²⁶ if not in the DIP cinematic documentation of his visit, objections are much more rampant in the memos of RKO executives, where they take on an alarmist tone. Lynn Shores appears to have taken the lead by suggesting to a DIP official that

distinct cluster at the bottom end, for whites, and then another distinct cluster at the top end, for blacks. . . . in Brazil, the result would be quite different. There would still be a cluster of whites, but it would be more diffuse, representing a somewhat wider color range. And the black Brazilians wouldn't really form a cluster at all . . . they would be plotted into a relatively smooth distribution, all the way from coal to cream, stretching from the darkest "after midnight" shades right up to the edge of the white cluster.³¹

Historically, this spectral approach in Brazil has been mitigated by intervening factors of family history and socioeconomic opportunity, which are beyond the scope of this discussion; nevertheless, the strong national differences in perceptions of and attitudes toward race continue to hold sway.

Between the lines of the RKO memos there is also a tone of perplexity and irritation, especially on Shores's part, over the infiltration during the "Carnaval" shoot of Brazilian collaborators, such as Morel, Othelo, and Martins, along with the panoply of nonprofessional cariocas who had been recruited to add to the authenticity of the re-created scenes.³² Welles's binational, ethnographic approach to shooting, placing numerous Brazilians, most of them "nonwhite" in appearance, in front of the camera, and the American crew along with a few Brazilian advisers, both "white" and "black," behind it, broke radically with standard industrial practice at that time. One need only compare the casting and focalization in "Carnaval" with what was done in *Flying Down to Rio*, *Down Argentine Way*, and even Hitchcock's *Notorious*, which used Rio as a scenic backdrop as late as 1945.

Beyond the logistical difficulties Welles's approach created during shooting—the majority of extras and even the Brazilian principals did not speak English, making even straightforward blocking and movement on the set unwieldy—it seems to have signaled a loss of production control at best, and an unsalutary "mingling with the natives" at worst, for most RKO chiefs and the more xenophobic members of the U.S. crew.³³

Urban Space, Spirituality, and Characterization in "Carnaval"

To fully understand the Brazilian official response to Welles's interpretation of "Carnaval," it is necessary to take into account the transformations of both samba and Carnival under President Getúlio Vargas during the Estado Novo. These practices were converted from cultural capital in its "embodied" and "objectified" states for the Brazilian working class, to cultural capital in an "institutionalized" state for the purpose of generating economic capital for the Brazilian culture industry and strengthening the image of the Brazilian nation at home and abroad.³⁴ In the international sphere, we can see this conversion in the exportation of Carmen Miranda to the United States and, soon thereafter, Hollywood.³⁵ We see it, as well, in the choice of

the 1942 Carnival as the subject for Welles's film in Brazil. On the domestic front, it is evident in the state's regulation of the Carnival celebration itself, along with the radio medium, through which new sambas were promoted, as a means of circulating propaganda and generally consolidating a popular base for the Vargas regime. In both cases, this official appropriation and instrumentalization of popular culture translated into a new demarcation between modern, "legitimate" (i.e., big-band and "whiter") and traditional, "illegitimate" (i.e., "blacker" and improvisational) forms of samba performance and Carnival celebration. In effect, each of these practices was splintered symbolically and spatially into popular culture with a national, capital *P* versus a small regional and local *p*, to invoke Nestor García Canclini's distinction.³⁶

The institutionalization of Carnival by Vargas began in 1935, when the samba schools that performed yearly in the celebration were required to register with the federal government, and there are signs that government regulation of Carnival was increasing precisely around 1942, when one begins to find sambas explicitly promoting the social engineering ideology espoused by Vargas. This trend was not lost on Welles and his team, especially screenwriter Robert Meltzer, who, like Welles, lamented the "degeneration" of Carnival in its vitality of spirit and degree of popular participation and control. Meltzer writes: "In certain quarters there's the very strong feeling that these competitions [between samba schools] are just another manifestation of Government paternalism. Some unknown character said to me that in the old days the Government tried to stop rivalry between the hills whereas now they encourage it; but in the old days this rivalry meant blood, whereas now it simply means fandangles and tamborims."³⁷

The mere fact of positing the plurality of samba and the transformation of Carnival (its social conditioning and government appropriation) in *It's All True* by tracing samba to its roots in the favelas; linking and contrasting the *batuques* in the hills with the glittery Casino samba performances; and showing the organic ties of Catholicized samba (through Carnival) to the samba of Afro-Brazilian spiritual worship in the form of *umbanda* and *candomblé* was a significant transgression of the official boundaries between "samba for sale and for hire" ("white" samba) and "samba to hide" ("black" samba), between legitimate (Catholicism) and officially outlawed (*umbanda*, *candomblé*) forms of religious practice.³⁸ Even in the absence of the edited work, which would have brought such contrasts and juxtapositions into relief, Welles was already taking sociocultural risks in the Carnival recreations at Cinédia and in the Quintino neighborhood. Indeed, risks were already being taken in his prolific black-and-white documentation of mostly black, working-class Carnival venues in downtown Rio, such as the Teatro da República, other *gafieiras*, and certainly the Lapa district, which at the time was strongly associated with transvestitism, *malandragem* (vagrancy, petty crime), and prostitution. In contrast to formal ballroom dancing, or spot-

lighted dancing at nightclubs and casinos, *gafieras*, derived from the French root word *gaffe*, were (and still are) popular dances at which spontaneous pairing of partners, hastily invented dance steps, and off-fashion or garish outfits are acceptable.

Welles's decision to cast Othelo in the role of *malandro* only complicated matters, for Othelo's *malandro* does not take on negative connotations within the diegesis. Instead, his character assumes double significance as a vital presence within the Afro-carioca musical scene and as a *muse* for the fictionalized Carnival itself. This revaluation of the *malandro* contrasts directly with the portrayal in the Brazilian *chanchada*, which is one of the hypotexts for *It's All True*. As Zeca Ligiéro and Ana Coelho have noted, "the general traits of this very Brazilian character were related to the Portuguese understanding of the *malandro* . . . and the actors [performing the character] were of European descent. . . . the African-Brazilian cultural context was rarely framed by those cinematographic productions."³⁹

As Ligiéro goes on to explain, the "Portuguese understanding" emphasized the *malandro's* vagrancy, unemployment, and involvement in petty crime—in sum, depicted him as a "rogue"—whereas for the Afro-carioca community, the *malandro* became both a strategy for survival and a form of self-expression for a marginalized sector within the urban population. Within this community, the *malandro's* status was gauged by his display of skill and talent in capoeira and samba composition and performance, not by his insertion into the "legitimate" urban labor market. From this point of view, *malandragem* (or engagement in *malandro*-like behavior) was, Ligiéro argues, an embodiment of social resistance in the face of continued economic exploitation and discrimination against black men in Brazilian society.⁴⁰

By 1942, most probably in response to rapid modernization and the increasing contrast between the hills and the casino district, *malandragem* was itself undergoing a division, as described by Robert Meltzer: "The former [Hill Malandro] is really a Vagabundo, or a real bum; he lives up in some favella [*sic*], dresses miserably, smells foul, drinks cachaça [cane liquor] all day long, and has absolutely no 'specialties.' He is despised by the Plain Malandro, who is still a marvelous gambler, is the one who really knows Capoeira, can handle a razor deftly, dresses with the characteristic accoutrements, walks with the swagger, smells nicely, and is adored by all the prostitutes."⁴¹

Nicely dressed, visibly adept at capoeira in the "Praça Onze" sequence, and a "regular" at samba practice, Othelo thus fits the description of the thoroughly urbanized *malandro*. However, as Meltzer points out, capoeira, an autochthonous Afro-Brazilian martial art, was at this time already "frowned on by the authorities," while, according to Antônio Pedro Tota, *malandragem* as a whole was being actively discouraged by the Vargas regime through the promotion of sambas that emphasized the values of working and marriage in the eyes of church and state.⁴² According to Tota, this "civilization by

samba” was carefully orchestrated by none other than the DIP,⁴³ and it is hardly surprising that in this climate, Martins and Othelo’s popular hit “Praça Onze” won second place after “Saudades da Amélia” in the 1942 Carnival ranking of sambas. “Amélia” is less interesting musically and hardly as memorable within the collective consciousness as “Praça Onze,” yet the song’s lyrics reveal the heroine to be a hardworking, highly marriageable woman, bringing it into much closer alignment with the cultural politics of the Estado Novo.

Thus, during the shooting of both “Carnaval” and “Jangadeiros,” Welles seemed to be positioning himself on the side of the Afro-carioca and *jangadeiro* communities, and not safely enough within the confines of the Estado Novo’s official “pro-work” ideology (*trabalhismo*) to please Vargas and his supporters. In foregrounding the contributions of the *jangadeiros* and Afro-cariocas to civil rights, the democratic process, and national popular culture, respectively, Welles was, in effect—and much to the chagrin of the national elite—portraying Brazil as a primarily *Afro-caboclo* nation.

On a deep-structural level, I have argued that, as an ensemble of episodes, *It’s All True* contested what can be termed the hegemonic flows of geocultural discourse in cinematic representations during World War II. While this rerouting made logical sense, insofar as a new Good Neighbor Policy based on reciprocity and cooperation required that preexisting boundaries and cultural assumptions be held in abeyance to permit a restructuring of hemispheric relations, however temporary, it also increased the level of geosocial flexibility in the diegesis. The element of flux in North-South relations, intimately connected to the blurring of racial and national boundaries in the film, was decoded by the more conservative sectors within the film industry (with the notable exception of Schaefer and Reisman at RKO) as a sign of social and generic impurity along with a disrespect for Western tradition at best, and as contributing to outright political subversion (and by extension economic liability) at worst.⁴⁴

At this juncture, it is important to note that, notwithstanding Welles’s unapologetic, if not entirely radical, departure from the models of representing social relations espoused by dominant interests in three key habituses—the Hollywood industry, the U.S. State Department, and the Brazilian Estado Novo—OCIAA authorities seem to have been relatively unperturbed by Welles’s approach to his filmic subject matter. They also seem to have taken more of a hands-off attitude in general, compared with either RKO or the DIP, toward the productions they cosponsored, leaving filmmakers and producers to freely develop the topics they were assigned to cover until the films’ review immediately prior to release. These reviews occurred in two ways: either through special OCIAA-commissioned committees, made up of business leaders and local authorities, set up in each Latin American country to assess the appropriateness of the release of a U.S. film in that particular setting; or by the Motion Picture Division (MPD), based in New York, to ap-

prove or recommend changes to a completed feature film destined for the Latin American market (in anticipation of possible objections in that region). (A different script approval procedure was in place for educational shorts produced by the MPD.) In Welles's case, the OCIAA did not become involved in screenplay review until serious discussions began with RKO in fall 1943 regarding how to revive the project.

The Unedited Work

There is little doubt that the evaluation of the entire film of *It's All True* on the basis of unedited footage contributed to the margin of error and suspicion on the part of RKO decision makers in mid-1942, a margin that was progressively widened in the many accounts of Welles's career that appeared in the wake of the film's suspension. Welles himself made the point in relation to RKO's failure to make productive sense of the "Carnaval" footage: "[T]hey only saw a bunch of jigaboos [*sic*] jumping up and down; the samba music hadn't even been synched up yet."⁴⁵ While this margin of uncertainty holds true for any film still in production, it has applied especially to documentary-based films like *It's All True*. The possibility for misinterpretation has been heightened by Welles's deliberately light touch given to plot-motivated actions in the footage, so as to allow the intrinsic cultural logic of pro-filmic actions to come into view; his unrealized plans for achieving cultural translation mainly through the syntagmatic structuring of recorded cultural practices into ritual *processes*; the complex paradigmatic relations between different types of samba (and respective lyrics) and images of the Carnival celebration; and plans for didactic explanations of image content to be delivered in voice-over narration by Welles and others.

The RKO executives viewing the footage back in Hollywood were hardly diplomats or anthropologists. Moreover, viewing at a distance from the central governmental agenda, they were only minimally interested in the intrinsic cultural and historical value of the pro-filmic material. Hence, the dominant perception that the footage lacked grammar and syntax (which of course it did at that stage, in terms of Hollywood narrative codes and procedures), attached to the logical suspicion that the shoot would not, and could not, lead to the making of an integral film. This view was expressed as early as 1942 by RKO executive Reginald Armour: "We have received 60,000 feet here and there is no picture in it."⁴⁶ It was reiterated in 1943 by William Gordon in a memo to Charles Koerner: "It still looks like a hodge-podge, and I'd be scared to death of it, so far as broad audience appreciation is concerned";⁴⁷ and again in 1952 by an RKO technician who summarizes the "Jangadeiros" footage as follows: "[F]our natives decide to go to Rio via primitive raft to appeal for aid for their people. . . . The material as a whole is pretty dull and boring and I don't see much possibility of salvage."⁴⁸

Brazilian authorities might take umbrage at Welles's repeated filming of "the Negro and the low class element in and around Rio" for the re-creation of "Carnaval."²⁷ A later memo by William Gordon—written in evident miscomprehension of the more accepting Brazilian attitudes toward miscegenation, along with the absence of sharp spatial segregation along racial lines in daily and celebratory life—manifests trepidation over how not only the prevalent blackness but also the abundant and "indiscriminate intermingling" of races in *It's All True* will be received by audiences "south of the Mason-Dixon line."²⁸ Gordon thus echoes the apprehensions of MGM producers with regard to the funding and release in the South, more than a decade earlier, of King Vidor's all-black melodrama *Hallelujah!*²⁹

In post-Production Code Hollywood cinema, it was crucial that a sexual division of labor be established *together* with racially segregated spaces transecting gendered and class boundaries, for *both* African American and Latin American performers in relation to "white" protagonists. Spatial integration and the granting of equal privileges and rights to what were perceived as different races tended to raise the specter of miscegenation in the political unconscious of de facto *Plessy v. Ferguson* supporters within and outside the film industry. Evidence of such racial paranoia in conservative sectors of the U.S. "white" population can be found in letters Welles received in response to his "Woodard" radio broadcasts in August 1946. After he publicly defended the civil rights of a returning black soldier, brutally beaten and blinded during a South Carolina bus ride, Welles was questioned by several listeners as to whether he would want "his daughter to marry a black man" or to "have a black man's baby."³⁰ One should not underestimate, then, the perceived sexual and social threat posed by the spatial contiguity of mixed races, exuberant and scantily clad, in a film intended to promote inter-American dialogue. Most RKO executives were no more prepared to accept Grande Othelo as a star performer intercut and woven into the same pro-filmic space with phenotypically "white" Brazilian performers than they would have been with regard to a biopic starring Louis Armstrong, who would have been shown freely fraternizing with "white" jazz musicians and fans in "The Story of Jazz." Welles therefore appears to have been overly optimistic in anticipating that his depiction in "Carnaval" of racial mixing, legitimated by a yearly Catholic ritual in a Latin American setting, would be acceptable to RKO on "culturally relativistic" grounds. (For an example of the kind of scene RKO might have objected to, see figure 22, page 110.)

Journalist Eugene Robinson has aptly described the distinction between U.S. and Brazilian approaches to racial classification as follows:

Assign every individual's skin tone a number—the darker the skin, the higher the number—and then plot these numbers on a graph. In the United States, assuming you were just dealing with blacks and whites, you'd have one

One even finds Welles's former editor Robert Wise (though not directly involved in any of the editing of the *It's All True* footage) reportedly describing it as "simply a jumble of what was essentially travelogue stuff."⁴⁹ Most unfortunately, this perception has been echoed in the assessments made by critics such as Charles Higham, Richard Jewell, and David Thomson, as noted in chapter 3.⁵⁰ Given the unabashedly racist responses of studio executives to the rushes, it seems important to distinguish here between an inability to "make sense" of the footage due to cultural misunderstanding and unfamiliarity, and a reactionary stance toward the fairly accurate impression that Welles was seeking to radically alter the profile of Afro-Latino-American subjectivity in U.S.-produced mainstream cinema.

The denial and devaluation of the text combined with the virtual eclipsing of Welles's cultural ambassadorship as the main rationale behind the expedition have led in existing accounts to the self-serving occlusion of the very activities that could have clarified matters: Welles's working methods and the promise his diplomacy held for the film's possibilities of completion.

JUST WHAT WAS WELLES DOING "DOWN THERE"?

The Ambassadorial Appointment

Beyond the doubts surrounding the project itself, throughout the Euro-American literature on Welles, one finds skepticism (or at least an element of puzzlement) with regard to the motives behind Welles's diplomatic tour to South America. These puzzlements have appeared in biographies that putatively value and defend Welles's first films at RKO, such as David Thomson's *Rosebud* and Jean-Claude Allais's *Premier Plan: Orson Welles*, and in the work of those who take delight in disseminating and troping on Welles's public persona, such as Leaming, Higham, and Brady. Others, such as Richard Jewell and Otto Friedrich, who fall more into the category of "studio apologists," have echoed this tendency in the course of justifying Welles's dismissal from RKO.⁵¹ Unfortunately, the seeds of doubt were planted at the time of the production: as late as January 14, 1942, *Variety* announced that "Welles is planning a vacation in South America when he winds up his current job, 'The Magnificent Ambersons.'"⁵² Thus, Welles's acceptance of the "Good Will" appointment in November 1941 has either been ignored or been depicted as an unpardonably irresponsible act at worst, and at best, an unnecessary distraction from more "serious" work.

Like the tropical tropes that, via Welles's body, have eclipsed the seriousness, not to mention existence, of the work in progress, such assertions indicate a doubly synecdochic move, whereby the project itself becomes exoticized by virtue of its location in the Southern Hemisphere. Latin America is represented as a time-warped vacation spot where the conditions for productive labor are primitive, at best. Thus, Richard Jewell claims in his first

account that it was necessary for Welles and crew to lug all their film equipment to Rio for the shoot, because "Brazil had no film industry to speak of."⁵³ So great has been the underestimation of Welles's diplomatic mission that even at the peak of wartime negotiations with Latin America, RKO executive Reginald Armour insinuated that Welles was staying in South America to "duck military service."⁵⁴

A consideration of the parameters and pressures of Welles's ambassadorial appointment on its own merits is in order. Once the United States officially entered into World War II, it was commonplace for Hollywood directors and producers to be temporarily relieved of their studio responsibilities to enlist as officers in the U.S. armed forces or otherwise lend their skills to wartime defense. The ambassadorships of artists working in various disciplines formed an important component of the new wartime program of cooperation between the OCIAA and the film industry. In early 1941, several joint committees, composed of representatives from the film industry and the OCIAA, were formed to consolidate the Latin American film initiative, among them the Committee on South American Visits chaired by producer Joseph Schenck.⁵⁵

A partial listing of U.S. cultural luminaries who traveled to Latin America (and especially Brazil) under the auspices of the OCIAA reveals not only the solid historical precedent for such a mission but the kind of company Welles was keeping when he accepted Whitney and Rockefeller's invitation. Russian-born painter Misha Reznikoff and photojournalist Genevieve Naylor were stationed in Brazil from October 1940 to May 1943. George Balanchine and the American Ballet Company performed on tour for four months in 1941. Walt Disney traveled to Bolivia, Peru, Chile, Argentina, and Brazil, August to October 1941, and to Mexico mid-October 1943. Composer Aaron Copland visited Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and Cuba, mid-August 1941 to December 1941. Jazz musician and actor Bing Crosby went to Brazil and Argentina, August to late October 1941. Journalists Charles Barry and Marcos Weimer were also dispatched to Brazil, September 1941. Rita Hayworth appeared in Brazil, March 1942, followed by lyric soprano Florence Fisher, September 1943, actress Grace Moore, and director John Ford and cinematographer Gregg Toland the same year.⁵⁶

In addition to cultivating acceptance and generating publicity for U.S. cultural production in these countries, many OCIAA ambassadors were called upon to gather intelligence for the U.S. government, especially those visiting Axis-prone zones such as Argentina, Brazil, or Chile. In Brazil, Misha Reznikoff was specifically assigned to collect information about pro-Axis integralist elements inside the Getúlio Vargas government.⁵⁷ Soon thereafter, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., an envoy of the U.S. State Department (rather than the OCIAA), was sent to Brazil in 1941 to investigate pro-Axis sympathies and strategies on behalf of the British government.⁵⁸ Given Welles's thor-

ough briefing in Washington, D.C., prior to his trip to Brazil, along with the critical moment in U.S.-Brazilian relations that coincided with his stay there, it is not unlikely that he would have been called upon to do the same. In any event, it is known that his executive assistant, Richard Wilson, did gather intelligence for the government while on military duty as an army officer following his return to the United States. Recent historiography of World War II has shown that intelligence-gathering in Latin America was not incidental but a *cornerstone* of Allied strategy vis-à-vis the Axis powers and their sympathizers, who were also conducting intense intelligence activity in that region.⁵⁹

In hindsight, Welles's acceptance of John Hay Whitney's express invitation at a critical moment in hemispheric relations was a logical and patently patriotic choice, in view of the fact that he did not qualify for military duty. It is well known, for example, that Welles was politically active at this time and maintained close ties with President Franklin Roosevelt, prior to and during the war.⁶⁰ The mission provided Welles, who had been squarely in the limelight since October 1938, with the opportunity to demonstrate his level of commitment to democracy and the fight against fascism, and although he would be forfeiting his usual salary (as other ambassadors had done) during the tour, it did not appear to interfere with his standing studio commitments. As a bonus, Welles would be able to exercise his interests and talents simultaneously in the areas of public speaking, radio, and filmmaking, much as he had been doing in the United States. Significantly, Brazilian observers and critics have recognized the ambassadorial appointment as a primary motivation for Welles's having embarked on a new angle for *It's All True*: "What prompted the author of *Citizen Kane* to throw himself into the endeavor was neither commercial nor solely artistic in nature. Above all, he was motivated by civic idealism: he became an enthusiastic adherent of Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy."⁶¹ This perception of Welles's purpose for the voyage has been echoed by all the members of his entourage, notably Richard Wilson and George Fanto, and emphatically stated by Welles himself in Leaming's biography (see fig. 36).⁶²

At the core of critical objections to Welles's sojourn in Brazil is its lengthy duration, to which a series of negative valuations such as waste, disorganization, vagrancy, and a general lack of responsibility have been attached. Although in theory any studio might be legitimately concerned over a director's prolonged absence during wartime, this complaint would carry more weight if (1) Welles had gone to Brazil only to make a film; (2) the film he was making had not been a cultural documentary but a pre-scripted fiction film with a determined number of scenes and locations used mainly as scenic backdrops; and (3) new RKO management had not taken full advantage of his absence to cut and reshoot *The Magnificent Ambersons* and explore ways of prematurely terminating his contract.



Figure 36. Orson Welles at awards reception for *Citizen Kane*, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, April 1942. The award was given by the newly formed Argentine Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. To his left is Argentine actress Mecha Ortiz; to his right are actress Delia Garcés and director Victor Saslavsky. Courtesy Orson Welles Manuscripts Collection, Lilly Library, Indiana University.

It is worth mentioning that most of the other “Good Will” ambassadors went on tours lasting two to four months, and although their trips tended to be briefer, the other Hollywood envoys to Brazil either were not involved in production activity or were preparing projects of an entirely different nature. For example, Walt Disney used his stay in 1941 as a kind of cultural safari to gather the information, music, images, voices, and characters necessary to develop as yet undefined 16mm animated films for the inter-American market. Both scripting and animation took place at his studio back home. Disney’s heavy reliance on animation to portray the landscape and cultures of the countries he visited and his use on location of 16mm Kodachrome, instead of 35mm Technicolor, greatly reduced the amount of time he needed to spend traveling in South America.⁶³ Although his expedition lasted two months, the conceptual elaboration and material completion of the four-part *Saludos Amigos*, Disney’s first feature film to be based on this material, took a full eight months *after* his return to Hollywood.⁶⁴

This time frame can be compared with the shooting and anticipated post-

production schedule for *It's All True*, a four-part film shot mostly on location in remote regions with nonprofessional actors, real bulls, *jangadas*, changes in sailing conditions, and unwieldy urban crowds in Rio, and, on the beach in the Northeast, without electricity. In Mexico, Foster's crew shot for approximately two months at mostly rural locations (most delays were due to bad weather); Welles shot the scenes for the two Brazilian episodes over a six-month period that included two months of intensive research. It is equally relevant to compare Disney's time frame with Welles's track record with his RKO studio productions: *Citizen Kane* was shot over a four-month period and edited in two months; *The Magnificent Ambersons* was filmed between October 1941 and January 1942 and was ready for preview by March 1942.⁶⁵ Although Disney's completion schedule was doubtless influenced by the need to make countless individually illustrated frames and stop-motion cinematography for animation, Welles was equally engaged in various kinds of audiovisual experimentation involving live action, new lighting methods and shooting techniques, specially designed sets, and a complex design for mixing sound elements on the sound track.

What Disney had that Welles did not was guaranteed funding with fewer strings attached and production autonomy: RKO released Disney's films upon completion but did not interfere in any way with the process of their making. Disney's example is also instructive in that together with the visits of other cultural ambassadors, his trip formed an important precedent for conducting *research* in Latin America that could be used to improve audiovisual imagery upon the ambassadors' return to the United States. Thus, in creating a longitudinal approach to documenting Brazil on film, Welles was not merely following Flaherty's footsteps: together with Disney, he was carrying out the cinematic equivalent of the endeavors of the ambassadors in the other arts. For example, following his return from his travels, Aaron Copland composed "Danzón Cubano" and other works incorporating Latin influences.⁶⁶ In this context, there was nothing unusual about the temporal parameters of Welles's stay in Latin America. Its qualitative differences in strategy with Disney's project(s) stemmed from his willingness to engage Brazilians in the conception and execution of the project and, like Naylor and Reznikoff (and of course Flaherty), to translate the findings from location research into an expressive statement elaborated in situ.

A second facet of the duration of Welles's stay involves his multiple responsibilities while in Brazil, including his obligatory attendance at cultural and social gatherings hosted by the carioca elite and his delivery of public lectures on various topics, from Shakespeare to the U.S. theater to painting, along with radio broadcasts. These broadcasts were aimed expressly at improving the political impression U.S. citizens had of Brazil by publicly confirming Vargas's new alliance with the Allied forces, and at literally blocking the access of the Axis powers to hemispheric airwaves.⁶⁷ The trip to Latin

America was extended further to permit Welles to tour a number of countries in the fulfillment of his ambassadorial mission, as other ambassadors had done before him. These other areas of duty either have been dismissed too readily or have been a target for criticism in the studio-apologetic accounts. Once again, echoing Reginald Armour, Jewell adheres to a voluntaristic logic by stating that Welles "agreed to return, after visiting Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador [etc.],"⁶⁸ thereby insinuating that he was just dallying, avoiding the "real world" back at RKO.

At the same time, in analyzing RKO's responses to Welles's trip, it should be recognized that this type of expedition *was* out of the ordinary for a Hollywood crew accustomed to working in a cloistered studio environment and in accordance with strict company rules and schedules. With air travel to South America still relatively new in 1942, most North Americans knew very little about Brazil. Conversely, as Levine has observed, Brazil itself was culturally self-absorbed at this time and not yet accustomed to harboring thousands of foreign tourists each year.⁶⁹ (Hence the Brazilian government's decision to lure new tourists to Rio through the "Carnaval" project and create a favorable image for itself in the United States.) Moreover, in all probability—given Welles's rush to finish several projects simultaneously prior to departure, along with RKO's prerogative in the hiring of technical personnel—many of those in Welles's 27-member crew were neither sufficiently briefed nor psychologically prepared to undertake the type of shooting required for both phases of the "Carnaval" episode, let alone engage in a meaningful exchange with a culture they had come to know only through Astaire and Rogers's carioca in *Flying Down to Rio* or the rhythms and choreographies of the lady in the tutti-frutti hat. This lack of preparation partially accounts for Lynn Shores's complaints regarding "the hot weather, the bad food, and the impossibility of operating in an efficient Hollywood manner."⁷⁰ One finds similar sentiments expressed by Ned Scott, a still photographer contracted by RKO (although he also mentioned difficulty working with Shores).⁷¹

In reviewing the more immediate factors responsible for the project's outcome, one should not overlook the assignment of a disgruntled Shores to the task of overseeing the Brazilian shoot and representing it to RKO executives in Hollywood. According to cameraman Joseph Biroc, he and Shores remained in Brazil well beyond the departure of most of the crew in June 1942 to oversee the safe shipment back to the United States of equipment generally, as well as of footage shot in Fortaleza.⁷² Shores was therefore in a position to further poison the waters both in Rio de Janeiro and in Hollywood throughout the "Jangadeiros" shoot.

Yet, even under these unfamiliar and difficult circumstances, there was no generalized mutiny of Welles's crew, as Jewell suggests.⁷³ The film crew list in Cinédia Studio records corresponding to the latter portion of the "Carnaval" shoot closely matches the Mercury/RKO list of the crew upon em-

barking for Rio in January. Many members of the U.S. crew were happy and relieved to return home in June, but few of them reacted negatively to the shooting experience. Most of the Mercury Productions staff also shared Welles's dedication and commitment to completing the project and attempted to derive the maximum benefit from their exposure to a foreign location, including respite from routine obligations and participation in a groundbreaking project at a pivotal moment in hemispheric history.

It should also be borne in mind that as far as Welles was concerned, he had completed all of the necessary shooting for *The Magnificent Ambersons* prior to his departure from the United States. Not only did that film have a detailed shooting script, a rough cut, and detailed notes that editor Robert Wise could use as a guide, but Welles had already arranged with Wise to complete the final cut of *Ambersons* in Rio. Granted, this was an ambitious plan for 1942, and when, due primarily to wartime logistics, it did not come about, Welles immediately began cabling Hollywood once he had viewed the first final cut (technically, a fine cut), which arrived safely in Rio de Janeiro.⁷⁴ There is little question, lest the voluntaristic argument still hold sway, that the long-distance editing scheme was due not to capriciousness on Welles's part but to the necessity of being in Brazil in time to shoot "Carnaval" so as to fulfill the terms of his governmental appointment.

Seeing Red

Under the spell of these historical blind spots, other explanations, given separately or in combination, have come to take precedence: (1) the alleged cost of *It's All True*, which would have put RKO back "into the red"; (2) Orson Welles's alleged ties to the Communist Party, leading to the public accusation, in 1947 (a pivotal year for leftists and progressives in the film industry), that he was "red as a firecracker";⁷⁵ (3) Welles's alleged philandering, extravagance, and lack of work discipline on location (those "Wild Nights" referred to by Barbara Leaming),⁷⁶ to the point of creating a financial burden for RKO and offending his Brazilian hosts; (4) the *jangada* accident in May and disappearance of the hero Jacaré; and (5) the alleged placement of a "curse" on the "Carnaval" film by practitioners of *macumba* in Rio de Janeiro,⁷⁷ both of the latter inauspicious signs that perhaps Welles and crew had overstayed their welcome in Brazil. Each of these allegations will be considered in turn.

Fiscal Liability. Several studio apologists have stressed the cost of *It's All True* to RKO, which is either influenced by presumptions regarding Orson Welles's propensity for "profligacy" or is used to demonstrate yet another incidence of that profligacy. This is the case with the three accounts of the film's history given by Richard Jewell, who ends up arguing that the cost of this

project, made excessive by Welles's lack of work ethic, contributed not only to his short-lived career at RKO but to the downfall of George Schaefer, president of RKO Radio Pictures, who had hired him.⁷⁸ Jewell then makes two arguments regarding the economic cost of *It's All True*, both of which are debatable on factual grounds, as well as from the standpoint of global business logic and the political context in which the film was redesigned.⁷⁹

First, Jewell claims that the film created a financial *loss* for RKO.⁸⁰ Technically, Welles could only have *created* a loss for RKO if he had abandoned the project midstream or if, after the film's release in the United States and Latin America, RKO had not been able to recoup its investment. It should be remembered, too, that as cosponsor, the OCIAA had guaranteed \$300,000 *against* RKO's losses once a Class "A" picture was released.⁸¹ Given this incentive to make the initial investment, on a scale compatible with an "A" picture, RKO could have at least tried to release the film to protect itself against any losses, placing itself in the position of holding the OCIAA to *its* obligations. Instead, the studio attempted to use the uncompleted film as *leverage* with the OCIAA. Writes William Gordon, as late as September 1943: "In my humble judgment, I think we have the CIAA [*sic*] even more over a barrel than they have us and I believe the only practical way to get this matter finally disposed of is by getting the CIAA [*sic*] to *guarantee all further costs*, based on an approved final script, or by at least having the CIAA [*sic*] guarantee all costs over and above the fixed budget that would be agreed to by ourselves and Welles."⁸²

Closely related to Jewell's claim is the argument that the film went over budget, in violation of the \$500,000 cap on each feature film to be produced under Welles's contract.⁸³ One must differentiate here, however, among (1) what the film had actually cost RKO up to August 1942, (2) what all parties had initially agreed it was realistically expected to cost, and (3) what it would have cost to complete.

In the first category, Jewell cites a mid-May 1942 cost of \$526,867. An RKO internal accounting dated 30 July 1942, placed the accumulated cost at \$723,385 (including 27 percent of unspecified "indirect costs"), whereas Richard Wilson, from all accounts a meticulous record keeper, placed the total cost of the film at \$531,910.⁸⁴ Welles himself claimed later in life that he had spent a little more than half of the projected budget when shooting ended in Brazil (corroborating Wilson's estimate).⁸⁵ These figures indicate that as of the completion of the Brazilian shoot, Welles was within reasonable limits of what both parties (Mercury and RKO) claimed the film should have cost them. Jewell claims, for example, that George Schaefer did not expect Welles to spend "more than \$600,000 on production."⁸⁶ Welles, on the other hand, claimed (approximately around the time of Schaefer's inflammatory letter of May 1942) to have informed everyone at RKO that the film would cost from \$850,000 to \$1 million, or slightly under what it cost to produce *The Magnificent Ambersons* at the maximum limit and roughly what RKO

had expended on *Citizen Kane* at the lower limit, both of which were shot at the studio.⁸⁷ As it happens, there is no written evidence of a “preapproved” budget for *It’s All True*, indicating that RKO was placing considerable faith in the OCIAA guarantee.⁸⁸

Even if Welles had been engaging in retroactive wishful thinking and had never passed on such information to RKO, the studio still would have been running a lesser risk of loss with *It’s All True* compared with the two previous films, since it carried the OCIAA guarantee. It also should be remembered that because this film was designed to be released as part of the OCIAA’s program during the war, there was a built-in time limit for completion, and therefore for when the compensation for losses could be expected to take place. However, RKO and Mercury appear to have been solidly polarized with regard to their respective budget projections throughout the spring of 1942, and with no compromise in sight and no way of reducing what had already been allocated, the imminence of the rupture must have been felt.

Even more disturbing than this openly declared discrepancy is what appears to have been an inflationary projection as to what it would cost to complete *It’s All True*, calculated *behind the scenes*, at the studio. Jewell places the estimated amount at \$595,804, which matches the figure provided in original studio documents and places the total picture cost at \$1,122,671, or more than any other film Welles or the studio had made in the last two seasons.⁸⁹ However, Jewell does not specify just what version of the film these RKO budget calculations referred to or what specific expenditures they would cover. In fact, an RKO accounting memorandum dated 22 February 1949, lists the net costs of *It’s All True*, including insurance and overhead accumulating over the years, as \$875,502.09.⁹⁰

As for inflation, an earlier budget document, dated 6 April 1942, lists \$125,000 as an estimated salary for Welles—despite the fact that he had not been taking any salary, even according to RKO calculations, to date—placing the total estimated supervisory costs at \$127,850. Indeed, Welles forfeited his salary as writer, director, and producer on the project according to a spring 1942 press release.⁹¹ In the budget document of 12 May, referred to earlier, one finds an estimated “supervision” cost in the amount of \$129,592, as part of the overall estimated budget.⁹² And although one finds legitimate estimations, such as the \$11,958 owed Chucho Solórzano under his contract, there are other estimates for remaining expenses that are perplexing and highly suspect. For example, on the same page for “Bonito,” one finds \$9,445 in “location costs” and \$3,500 in “miscellaneous,” when this episode was already mostly shot and the same categories *to date* had cost \$11,536 and \$1,500, respectively.⁹³ Even more suspicious is the “Rio Sequence” page (in reference to “Carnaval”), with \$10,000 estimated as needed for “set standby labor” (when none had been used to date), \$22,798 needed for lighting (when \$22,832 had been used to date, and no lighting was to be used for

“Jangadeiros” to speak of), and a whopping \$72,068 required for location expenses (when \$90,018 had been spent to date).⁹⁴ Meanwhile, the “Studio” page of the same budget (remembering that Welles planned to rely on the studio as a location primarily for *the sound recording of music, dialogue, and editing*) lists the “supervision” cost cited earlier, along with an estimated \$8,500 for “process” shooting alone.⁹⁵

All these amounts are included in the more-than-a-million estimated budget figure cited earlier, and there is no evidence of this having been based on specific projections by Welles regarding the completion of the film. Indeed, Welles reported to an OCIAA attaché in Argentina shortly after leaving Brazil that RKO had included all of the *It’s All True* episodes, *planned or in production to date*, in its budgetary projections.⁹⁶

There are still other telling RKO-based signs of budgetary inflation, beginning with George Schaefer’s assertion in his fateful letter of 29 April to Welles that the Mexican episode, which he considered to be only 40 percent finished, already had “accumulated expenses . . . well over \$400,000.”⁹⁷ Meanwhile, the accumulated costs for “My Friend Bonito,” as per RKO calculations dated 25 April, were stated as \$78,492, with the *total* estimated budget set at only \$201,170.⁹⁸ These efforts to push the budget envelope beyond empirical proportions coincided, significantly, with the explicit deliberations over the legal arguments RKO could use in prematurely severing Welles’s contract, dated 27 April 1942. This memo was only days away from many of the “estimated” budget calculations, and Schaefer’s threatening letter.

In addition to stating that RKO could legally insist that the *It’s All True* budget not exceed \$500,000 and that the studio had to approve any budgetary commitments made by Mercury, the April 27 memorandum ends by claiming that RKO could invoke “material interference” by World War II and “the loss of world markets,” which would have made it “unfeasible to produce pictures of the type and cost which Welles wants to produce.”⁹⁹ I trust the reader will appreciate the level of irony in RKO’s invocation of “wartime conditions” to discontinue a film that had been expressly designed to help compensate for the loss of those European markets.

A second, more sobering irony is that the recent studio-apologetic accounts have tended to accept the inflationary figures—the legitimacy of which has never been questioned due to assumptions regarding Welles’s legendary “profligacy”—while overlooking the fact that as retribution for his overspending on “Carnaval,” Welles was asked to complete shooting for “Jangadeiros” on a mere \$12,000 budget, and succeeded.¹⁰⁰

Costly: As Compared with What?

Any budget, empirical or estimated, realistic or inflationary, has little meaning outside of an evaluative context. Most studio apologists have fol-

lowed RKO executives in basing their judgments of the *It's All True* budget on Welles's previous feature film releases at RKO. The political difficulties and Hearst's threats of boycott surrounding the release of *Citizen Kane* are well known, and predictably, they diminished the film's chances of showing a profit in the short run. Jewell cites the "final 'red' figures" on *The Magnificent Ambersons* as totaling \$624,000.¹⁰¹ Yet here, too, there were extenuating circumstances: *The Magnificent Ambersons* received a delayed release following a series of inconsistent previews and drastic cuts (effectively adding expenses to the budget), along with highly unfavorable marketing decisions. The film opened in the dead of summer 1942 (while Welles was still in Brazil) on a double bill with the screwball, inauspiciously titled "B" serial film *Mexican Spitfire Sees a Ghost*—a programmer's nightmare (even given the standard policy of block booking) and a self-defeating proposition for the studio.¹⁰² Moreover, *The Magnificent Ambersons* was budgeted under a separate contractual agreement between Welles and the studio, in tandem with *Journey into Fear*, a fact that created a certain awkwardness for the RKO legal department when contemplating the implications of terminating the Mercury-RKO contract.¹⁰³ In effect, neither of Welles's previous films at RKO provides a stable framework of comparison for the anticipated distribution of *It's All True*, although *Journey Into Fear*, a film favored by RKO management, also appears to have gone slightly over its approved budget.¹⁰⁴

To fully evaluate the cost of *It's All True* and what RKO could reasonably expect to obtain from it in the end, it is more appropriate to consider it as a form of Good Neighbor cinema cosponsored by the OCIAA, which also would have played a role in the film's release. Once one moves out of the sphere of RKO as a self-contained business entity and into the internationally strategic and political sphere of the OCIAA, one finds less of a concern with short-run profit and a greater concern with market building in the long run. The very rationale behind the OCIAA guarantees to private producers was to assist the studios in making films that, in the words of the coordinator, "otherwise would not have been produced."¹⁰⁵ Without having to read too much between the lines of this statement, films cosponsored by the OCIAA were not expected to perform according to the standards of ordinary studio product and therefore should not have been treated as such. Second, the expectation was expressed throughout the OCIAA documents that, given the extraordinary historical circumstances under which all U.S. citizens and businesses were operating during World War II, and the tremendous opportunities in the postwar period were the Allied forces to emerge victorious, certain compromises and sacrifices were necessary—and desirable—in the short term. One finds, for example, the following rationale given by Nelson A. Rockefeller for why the United States should set aside its national interests, narrowly defined, to actively assist in the growth of the Mexican film studios during what would soon become the Mexican Golden Age: "The fact

is that Mexico will never be a competitor of the American companies no matter how much help is given the Mexican industry, but if better Spanish pictures were made through the help extended to the Mexican industry, it should result in larger audiences, new theaters, and a stronger and better motion picture situation in Latin America."¹⁰⁶

This investment logic is clearly distinct from the conservative RKO "balanced budget" philosophy, disregarding future possibilities, including RKO's own eventual participation in the building of the Churubusco studio complex in conjunction with Azteca Studios in Mexico City at the war's end. The key to the OCIAA's logic in political *and* economic terms had to do with the size of the film audience in Latin America at that time: by the end of 1941, there were a total of 6,358 movie theaters in the region. Brazil had the highest number, with 2,360 theaters, followed by 1,125 for Mexico and 1,021 for Argentina.¹⁰⁷ In 1939, just prior to the war, Latin America was rated by *Variety* journal as one of four film markets "most likely to improve."¹⁰⁸

This investment logic is evident in contemporary inter-American counterparts to *It's All True*, the release of which benefited RKO's coffers. Like other Hollywood studios, Disney was trying to recover from the deficit created by the 1939 European blockade when it agreed to take on the production of films on the general subject of South America in tandem with the OCIAA's MPD war initiative. According to Richard Shale, *Saludos Amigos* cost \$296,000 to make (as mentioned, mostly produced in the studio), grossed \$1.2 million at the box office, and provided Disney with a profit of \$400,000, as compared with the million-dollar profits garnered by "war-oriented cheapies" at RKO during 1942–43.¹⁰⁹ *The Three Caballeros*, released toward the end of the war, cost the studio \$1,989,000 and, notwithstanding a higher box office revenue, yielded Disney a profit of only \$100,000.¹¹⁰ On the other hand, RKO's own *They Met in Argentina* (dir. Leslie Goodwin and Jack Hively, 1941), costing a "more reasonable" \$487,000 to make, bombed in Latin America.

Between making a film that would be successful in more global terms and one that would respect low to moderate budget limits at the expense of Latin American participation and locations, it is clear that Welles, as an envoy of the OCIAA, could not in good conscience have chosen the latter option.

The Hemispheric Box Office Potential of It's All True

It can be argued, contrary to Jewell's assertions, that RKO's adoption of a worst-case scenario for *It's All True* and an overly cautious, even prejudicial, approach to the marketing of *The Magnificent Ambersons* actually prevented it from deriving financial benefit from either film. Even if *It's All True* had gone to the full million-dollar budget Jewell describes, any loss at the box office would have been compensated in the amount of \$300,000. RKO

would never have forfeited more than \$700,000 upon the film's release (assuming a total loss would have occurred). And, given the timing of the film's projected completion as of August 1942, any shrinkage of revenue upon its immediate release could have been absorbed by the RKO's rise in profits overall around this time. According to Douglas Gomery, the studio registered a profit of \$1 million in 1941 and \$0.6 million in 1942, compared with a loss of \$1 million in 1940; by 1943 (reflecting six months of production under Schaefer's reign and another half year under the iron hand of Charles Koerner), studio profits reached \$6.9 million.¹¹¹ While Jewell has attributed this turnaround in the studio's finances to the more sensible management philosophy of Koerner, compared with Schaefer, one cannot discount the importance of the boost in domestic wartime movie attendance, together with the increased consumption of U.S. films in Latin America.¹¹²

Moreover, even *It's All True* were panned by U.S. audiences as RKO executives feared (especially among conservative audiences, such as "white" audiences in the segregated South and Southwest), the probability of such a loss occurring in the hemispheric market at large was quite remote given the strong precedent set by the Latin American releases of *Citizen Kane* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Although it is not possible to obtain exact amounts for box office revenue, the response to these films in Brazil and Mexico was especially favorable. In addition to the audience surveys cited in chapter 1, there was extensive press coverage indicating the power of *Citizen Kane* not only to garner admiration for Welles but also to *soften the resistance* of Latin American audiences to Hollywood product. One critic reviewing *Citizen Kane* for a popular Brazilian fanzine had this to say: "Go see 'Citizen Kane,' wait for its screening with enthusiasm and you can be absolutely certain that Hollywood, when it wants to, can make films of great value."¹¹³

Spanish-language sources corroborate this overall receptiveness toward *Citizen Kane*. Even prior to the film's Latin American release, Mexican critic Don "Q," a regular contributor to *Cine Mundial*, the Spanish-language film journal with the widest circulation, defended Welles against the censorious actions of the Hearst news organization, giving the film a vote of confidence: "The opinion is unanimous that the olympic tzar of North American journalism who considers himself alluded to [in the film], does not have the right to obstruct the exhibition of a film in which he is neither offended nor caricaturized. . . . As for Orson Welles . . . for some time we have formed our own opinion, and, since the day we met him, have considered him to be one of the most genial men to have passed through Hollywood. There is no doubt that 'Citizen Kane' has to be exceptionally [good]."¹¹⁴

In Mexico, moreover, *The Magnificent Ambersons* was considered worthy of a special issue of *Novela Semanal Cinematográfica*, a weekly *fotonovela* magazine (synopsizing the plot by providing stills with captions) based on popular new releases. In helping to deliver the promise of modern cinema to Latin Amer-

ica, and in providing a model that all filmmakers and viewers in the region could look up to, Welles was creating exactly the image of U.S. foreign film policy that the OCIAA wished to promote. Welles's engagement to Dolores del Río at the time of his departure for Brazil also had a favorable impact, indicated by the extent to which the Latin cultural press freely indulged in commentary on this liaison in the course of reporting on his filmmaking activity.¹¹⁵

There is little doubt, based on these precedents and the fact that *It's All True* was expected to depart favorably from the Good Neighbor patronizing and postcard-like norm, that the film would have garnered prolific reviews, while the OCIAA stamp of approval would have helped to guarantee access to major theaters and publicity in Latin America. Audience attendance no doubt would have been enhanced by the casting in the film of members of the very class and social sectors that had traditionally filled the movie theaters in urban Mexico and Brazil: the migrant working class and new middle class.

Significantly, here one finds another divergence in priorities among the habituses involved. The OCIAA seemed to favor films that could garner good box office revenues in Latin America, even if that success was not matched in the United States. This was, indeed, one of the rationales behind the need for state involvement in film exports during the war. Even if, owing to lower admission prices in Latin America, *It's All True* would not have garnered the profit that a film targeting a European as well as a U.S. audience would have achieved before the war, according to the OCIAA's logic, its release would have made for a more receptive disposition on the part of the Latin American public toward other, similar films. As the Brazilian and Mexican reviews just cited indicate, Latin American film critics were extremely "studio conscious"; the success of *It's All True*, as an RKO release, would have been chalked up to the studio, as well as to Welles.

In sum, RKO clearly had only to gain, not lose, by allowing Welles to complete *It's All True*. Moreover, given that this film was designed to be an instrument of international cultural relations, these gains and losses cannot be gauged fairly against the same criteria that would have applied to a film designed primarily for the domestic U.S. market. What seems to have been missing was a *political* commitment on RKO's part to the agreement it had struck with the OCIAA, a commitment that would have permitted it to overlook the short-term fiscal risks of releasing the film. The tendency of latter-day studio-apologetic accounts to scapegoat Welles for the studio's financial and management problems is equally questionable. As the budgets for *The Three Caballeros*, mentioned earlier, and for Alfred Hitchcock's *Suspicion* (produced by RKO as part of its 1941–42 program) indicate,¹¹⁶ Welles was *not* the most expensive auteur in terms of production budgets to release feature films through RKO. In any case, he can hardly be held primarily responsi-

ble for the chronic losses and managerial instability, which, as Jewell's history of the studio reveals, predated his tenure at the studio by a decade. Had his first two films been given more positive publicity exposure and distribution support at the time of their release, they might have suffered smaller short-term losses. While "fiscal liability" might plausibly have been invoked given the balance sheet prior to the market turnaround in 1942, RKO's primary motives for suspending the film must be sought elsewhere, especially at a time of upsurge in its box office revenues and near-peak film attendance nationwide.

Orson Welles as "Communist Agitator"

Although Welles's political views and activities have never been cited explicitly as a probable cause for the suspension of *It's All True*, there is enough evidence to suggest that suspicions regarding his Communist Party affiliations were growing in both Brazil and the United States at the time of the film's production. As such, they form a provocative subtext within the spectrum of causal forces emerging between 1939 and 1945. James Naremore's exegesis of Welles's FBI file, compiled between 1941 and 1956, shows that there was never any concrete evidence of Welles's membership in the Communist Party; yet, like a number of liberal and politically progressive directors in the Hollywood of the late thirties to early forties, Welles was placed under investigation for having close ties to writers, musicians, and actors who *were* suspected of being card-carrying CP members, and for speaking on behalf of loosely formed grassroots coalitions deemed to be "subversive."¹¹⁷ One should also remember that the war years were a period of labor unrest at the studios in response to the downsizing and stretching of work hours, and in the course of suppressing the independent film technicians' union (in favor of a closed shop for Teamster-controlled International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Motion Picture Operators [IATSE]), ideological differences came to the fore, laying the groundwork for the House Un-American Activities Committee investigations and hearings in the post-war period.¹¹⁸

However, Welles's conservative opponents were responding not to the fact of his being a "Communist" but to his continued engagement in activities that were deemed to be "Communistic." The term *Communist* is a powerful metonym, bearing different connotations and responding to different phenomenal triggers in each of the habituses under consideration. In the Brazilian context, the term was attached both to members of leftist parties (including the Communist Party) and to cultural and labor activists who worked independently of Vargas's Estado Novo to bring about social change in favor of the lower-middle and working classes. During periods of greater repression, it referred to anyone deemed to be a "threat" to the Estado Novo

who was not also a member of the conservative elite. Thus, the probing and promotion of favela life and culture by Welles and Meltzer (who himself had active ties to the Communist Party in the United States and had collaborated with Charles Chaplin on a film, *The Great Dictator* [1940], deemed by the Brazilian authorities to be ideologically unfit for distribution in that country) did not improve Welles's political credentials with the Vargas administration.

Moreover, according to Edmar Morel, himself a leftist who managed to work as a DIP-certified journalist, the grassroots *jangadeiro* leader Jacaré had been accused (incorrectly) of Communist affiliation by hard-core integralists in Rio in early 1942, leading Welles, by friendship and association with Jacaré, to be labeled a *comuna* as well.¹¹⁹ Jacaré's son, José "Guaiuba" Olímpio Meira, also revealed in a filmed interview that Jacaré had been imprisoned in Fortaleza, Ceará, on political grounds for his fishing colony organizing activities prior to making the trip to Rio in 1941.¹²⁰ In addition to the unfair division of the catch and high taxes, *jangadeiros* had to cope with the low prices set by commercial fishing enterprises that made it difficult for artisanal fishermen to compete.¹²¹ Thus, within the Brazilian national sphere, Jacaré set a precedent during the Estado Nôvo that grassroots Amazonian rubber-tapping organizer Chico Mendes would come to restage in the late eighties, and in some respects he was equally venerated after his death as a martyr-hero of the *jangadeiro* community.

Although the actual cause of Jacaré's "disappearance" has yet to be established—that is, whether it really was an accident, or a political assassination planned by the representatives of the Brazilian fishing industry¹²²—Welles's subsequent resolve to complete the film, showing the conditions that led to Jacaré's decision to make the voyage, clearly would have made him more vulnerable to close scrutiny by the DIP and Filinto Müller's secret police. The need to pay tribute to Jacaré's charisma and leadership in the Brazilian Northeast is openly cited by Welles's team as a primary motive for continuing with the "Jangadeiros" shoot.¹²³

During this period, there was also considerable intelligence activity being conducted domestically by the Brazilian government to identify "subversive" individuals and groups. Those deemed to be too great a threat, including Communists, risked being subjected to blacklisting (for employment), censorship (for publication), beating, imprisonment, torture, or a combination thereof.¹²⁴ Apparently, even "Good Will" ambassadors were not immune from such treatment. Peter Reznikoff, son of OCIAA ambassadors Misha Reznikoff and Genevieve Naylor, reports that his father was badly beaten by Müller's secret police one night in the fall of 1941, after making some anti-Axis remarks within earshot of the wrong, integralist crowd in a Rio de Janeiro bar.¹²⁵ Welles himself was spared such treatment (see fig. 37). However, he stated that he had been the object of Estado Nôvo espionage and harassment in



Figure 37. Orson Welles with Rio de Janeiro police chief Filinto Müller, spring 1942. Courtesy Orson Welles Manuscripts Collection, Lilly Library, Indiana University.

his 1945 radio broadcast commemorating Getúlio Vargas's ousting from power: "I remember the night we tried to photograph one of the tenement districts in the favellas [*sic*], the hills above Rio. Thugs surrounded us, and after a siege of beer bottles, . . . stones, bricks, and I hate to think what else, we retreated to a more photogenic district clutching our Technicolor cameras as we went. (If you knew the size of the darn things you'd grant that's no mean trick!)"¹²⁶

In the United States, the strategic use of *Communist* in relation to Welles was linked as much to his civil rights advocacy work as to the professional company he kept in Hollywood, on the stage, and over the radio waves. Between 1941 and 1943, the period covering the preproduction to the production aftermath of *It's All True*, Welles came under FBI suspicion (and attack by the conservative Hearst press) for a range of activities, beginning with his off-Broadway production of the racially sensitive play *Native Son*. The FBI perceived the production of this play as involving "communist team work,"¹²⁷ even though most of the plays directed or produced by Welles throughout the late thirties had relied on intense collaborative relationships with the actors and partners who would form Mercury Productions.

In March 1941, at the urging of writer Robert Meltzer, Welles came out in public support of International Longshoremen's Union president Harry Bridges. Also noteworthy were Welles's CBS radio broadcasts in defense of civil liberties and racial tolerance, many developed in collaboration with the Free Company; his speeches on behalf of the American Committee for Russian War Relief in New York, shortly after his return from Brazil in 1942; and, perhaps most crucially, his association, along with spouse Rita Hayworth, with Carey McWilliams (also a friend of writer John Fante) in the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee (which received Communist Party support), just prior to the outbreak of the notorious Zoot Suit Riots in Los Angeles in 1943.¹²⁸ The committee was dedicated not only to raising funds for the defense and appeal of the twelve falsely accused youth but also to exposing the endemic bias and discrimination waged against Mexican Americans in the California system of justice and law enforcement, and to generally raising public awareness of the plight of Mexican American citizens during the war. Welles wrote the foreword to the pamphlet "The Sleepy Lagoon Case," published in 1942,¹²⁹ and was moved to draft an open letter to Nelson Rockefeller that, while it praised the achievements of the OCIAA, the film industry, and the central government abroad, sought Rockefeller's help in curbing or defusing the tolerance shown by local authorities toward blatantly discriminatory actions against racial minorities in the United States, including peoples of Latin American descent, while the country was at war with the Axis powers and vigorously pursuing a cooperative relationship with Iberian-American nations.¹³⁰

The ethnic basis for red-baiting in the Sleepy Lagoon case, anticipating

an important target of the brazened anti-Communist backlash of the fifties, has implications for the manner in which Welles's treatment of racial and ethnic difference in *It's All True* might have been read by the right-leaning sectors of Hollywood and, most certainly, by those who would later support the HUAC hearings in Washington, D.C. California state senator Jack Tenney, who was investigating the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee, alleged that its chair, Carey McWilliams had "Communist leanings" because he "opposed segregation and favored miscegenation."¹³¹ Rodolfo Acuña has also noted that El Congreso de los Pueblos de Habla Español (the Spanish-Speaking Peoples' Congress), another independent group, was viewed by the FBI as a "communist front" on the grounds that it "opposed all types of discrimination against Mexicans."¹³² Representative Martin Dies, chairman of HUAC, bluntly stated as early as 1938 that "racial equality forms a vital part of the Communistic teachings and practices."¹³³ Thus, in heavily policed, early-forties Los Angeles, Welles, who has since been criticized by both Charles Chaplin and Zoot Suit chronicler Mauricio Mazón for sticking too closely to the liberal, Rooseveltian agenda of the time,¹³⁴ fell under close surveillance and was repeatedly red-baited for his views on race relations, civil rights, and inter-American understanding.

I have yet to locate evidence that explicitly links these investigations to RKO's treatment of Welles's contract and *The Magnificent Ambersons* and *It's All True* projects. However, it is important to point out the temporal coincidence of Welles's accelerated civil rights activism, leading up to the 1944 presidential election, with his earnest attempts to complete *It's All True*, as well as the use of the communications media by both Welles and his conservative detractors to get their divergent views on grassroots and antiracist activism across to the public. There are clear signs that RKO was following Welles's extramural activities as a public personality quite closely. An internal RKO memorandum from 1941 lists headlines from conservative Hearst-owned newspapers that accuse Welles's Free Company radio broadcasts of being "Un-American" and a "Spearhead for Red Propaganda" and of "Spreading Radical Doctrines under the Guise of Free Speech."¹³⁵

The Red of Xangô: Orson Welles as Malandro and Rei Momo

In chapter 3, I noted how, in many of the Euro-American auteur-centric accounts, Welles's contact with Brazil has been seen as exacerbating his allegedly erratic work habits, extravagant lifestyle, and liberal consumption of alcohol and women, with the film project becoming contaminated as a result. Several contemporary accounts also insinuated that Welles was the kind of *malandro* criticized in Vargas's pro-work samba songs, thus referencing Welles's relationship to the Afro-Brazilian working class. According to Lynn Shores's reports, Welles had irregular working habits and created scandals

by throwing furniture out of windows: this was primarily in reference to the leisurely afternoon spent with the Mexican ambassador just prior to Welles's departure for the Fortaleza shoot, during which he and his diplomatic drinking companion hurled some objects in jest a few stories down to the street below (there was also a prior incident involving a chair and a lampshade at the Copacabana Palace Hotel). However, with the exception of this incident, which Welles himself regaled in narrating, Shores's negative reports and diaries regarding Welles's *malandragem* have been strongly refuted by both the OCIAA reports and Welles's Brazilian and Mercury Productions collaborators.

For example, an RKO "Operations Report" (submitted by Shores) shows the following entries for the twelfth week of production: 9 April—"Mr. Welles this day had very important engagement with all directors and owners of newspapers for 3:00 P.M. cancelled this to 4 P.M. and showed up at 5 P.M."; 10 April—"No sign of Mr. Welles this day in any place"; 12 April—"Mr. Welles was on set at 8 A.M. . . . Just before shooting began Mr. Welles took a powder."¹³⁶ By contrast, the OCIAA diary for the *same dates*, based on information furnished by Richard Wilson, representing Mercury Productions, reads: 9 April—"Favella [*sic*] cancelled—weather. Welles meeting directors and owners of newspapers, 4 P.M. Talk *Instituto* 8 P.M."; 10 April—"second unit—*Favelas*. Welles conference Rolla, Ventura, Paiva, Iachonelli [all key people involved in Urca Casino shoot]"; and 12 April—"Sunday. Call necessary as only day musicians available. Welles absent two hours to get out of earlier appointment he had made in Petropolis."¹³⁷

Aside from the fact that they reflect a fundamental discrepancy in the perceptions of the two key organizations supporting Welles's work in Brazil, these diaries indicate a day-to-day monitoring of the project beyond what any traveling documentary filmmaker, from Flaherty to Eisenstein to Pare Lorentz to Disney, ever had to submit to while shooting. Such reports are not merely a key to the psychosocial dynamics of a Hollywood shoot in Latin America; they had a direct impact on the perceptions of the project by RKO studio executives and board members, who had few other means of obtaining news of Welles and company's performance.

Meanwhile, Brazilians very close to the production, such as Edmar Morel, Grande Othelo, and Herivelto Martins, all reported that Welles would share a few drinks in the evening with his stars and key collaborators. However, as my interviews with Othelo and Martins clarified, most of these meetings were in fact late-night work sessions to prepare for shooting the next day. All those I interviewed about the controversial "Carnaval" episode made a point of stressing Welles's teutonic discipline regarding the work schedule: even though he might have been up talking and clubbing until three or four in the morning, Welles expected everyone at the studio, ready to work promptly at eight o'clock. Apparently, Welles was so stringent about the punctuality of his actors and crew that Othelo lived with Martins for the duration of the

shoot because Martins, whose home was closer to the studio, could see to it personally that Othelo made it to work on time.¹³⁸

Alternatively, Welles is elevated to a kind of Rei Momo, or King of Misrule, riding about Rio in a motorcade, as in Leaming's reference to a samba specially composed for Welles titled "The Man in the Red Suit,"¹³⁹ as if to put a festive twist on the suspicions of the unnamed FBI informant on record. In other, less friendly accounts, the insinuation is that Welles was assigned to shoot Carnival, not participate in it. Participation, in the view of studio employees like Shores, was unprofessional and unbecoming of an American director representing the industry abroad. What is lost here is the contribution of Welles's earnest participant-observer approach not only to the transcultural ethic that framed the work in progress but also to the coordinator's mandate through the "Good Will" program of projecting a different image of Americans "in the flesh" abroad. Bernard Taper, George Balanchine's biographer, describes Balanchine's own mission to South America as follows: "to reveal to the people of South America through a medium that transcended the language barrier, that the North American colossus had a soul and was not just a grasping imperialist."¹⁴⁰

Yanqui Go Home?

In most Brazilian accounts, Welles's receptiveness toward a traditional yet complex social ritual and the music of the moment is perceived favorably as a diplomatic virtue. One finds this caption in a popular national magazine reporting on the Carnival celebration: "Since he [Welles] arrived, he joined the dance line. There is no party, *samba*, *frevo* or *batucada* at which he doesn't make an appearance. He is immensely popular, even though he is not a 'baldy.' . . . Here we see him in the Actresses' Ball, sambaing like a *connoisseur*, and crowning the queen of the party, who, by the way is a little 'abafa-deira.' . . . Hooray for Orson!"¹⁴¹

The willingness to embrace all facets of Brazilian culture and society, together with Welles's overriding tone of reconciliation in the emerging text of *It's All True*, was bound to create a mixed response from divergent ideological and socioeconomic quarters. Adding to the trail of articles criticizing Welles's approach to *It's All True* in the Brazilian conservative press, from the documentation of the favelas referred to earlier to the *jangada* accident in May (the latter taken as "confirmation" that the *jangadeiros*' exploits should never have been shown on film in the first place), Welles came under attack as late as 1945 from the progressive French-born photographer Jean Manzon and Brazilian journalist David Nasser for not completing the film, and for having "taken advantage" of earnest Brazilian participants and collaborators.¹⁴²

However, Manzon and Nasser also had personal axes to grind with Welles. Manzon had been the still photographer, replacing Ned Scott, on the “Carnaval” shoot and was angered when Welles chose to work with George Fanto as cinematographer on “Jangadeiros.” Alternative viewpoints on Welles’s treatment of Afro-Brazilian culture in “Carnaval,” Jacaré’s “disappearance,” and on the Manzon-Nasser accusations themselves are also evident in other press reports.¹⁴³ For the most part, these divergences in Brazilian public opinion can be attributed to the stakes attached to how *It’s All True* would represent the Brazilian nation and are thus rooted in competing visions of Brazilian national identity.

The Brazilian press reports, together with the RKO and OCIAA documentation and the FBI/DIP investigations, point to certain ideological constants in the construction of Welles and *It’s All True* within auteur-centric accounts. The majority of objections to Welles and the crew’s proceeding with *It’s All True* in 1942 seem to have stemmed from fiscally and ideologically conservative elements within RKO, as well as from conservative sectors within the Brazilian social elite, some of whom were part of the Vargas government. These patterns indicate that it is not simply a matter of an intersubjective disagreement over certain “facts”—indeed, in most recent arguments, very few facts are presented at all—but of a dispute that has involved the weighing of Welles and the film in light of political, moral, and aesthetic considerations, to echo Mary Douglas’s observations on the modern assessment of risk. Such considerations go well beyond a simple preference for a “Hollywood industry” versus an ethnographic approach to representing Latin America, since risk, as Douglas has noted, not only is a matter of probability (its “textbook” definition) but also has increasingly come to signify “danger.” The idea that *It’s All True* was a project too risky to be undertaken by RKO and avidly supported beyond mid-1942 by the OCIAA has been easily translated into a tropological operation, confounding Welles’s behavior, the film text, and the film “adventure” in a construction of Brazil as belonging to the “dangerous tropics,” a familiar filmic construction of subtropical geocultural locales dating back to “B” films of the thirties and resurfacing with a vengeance in the post-World War II period.

As a result, the vast majority of recent accounts have boldly overlooked not only the nature of Welles’s mission to Brazil but also the volatile political and economic climate in which the film evolved. To begin with, the evident resistance toward Welles’s vision of joining participatory democracy to the OCIAA’s project of hemispheric solidarity needs to be situated with respect to a rightward shift in U.S., Mexican, and Brazilian politics precipitated in part by the advent of the war. This shift was less the result of fifth-column activity (rather, the Axis fed on this shift) than an effort to contain and rechannel the political mobilization and enfranchisement of the grass roots that had

taken place during the thirties, so as to bring such mobilization more squarely under the purview of the state. Hence, unique ideological and strategic compromises were struck. For example, the Mexican ruling party, or P.R.I., was undergoing a transition from a strongly nationalist, socially reformist policy under President Lázaro Cárdenas to a more U.S.- and private capital-friendly, urban, and industrially oriented policy under the new president Manuel Avila Camacho, whose administration sought to strike a sustainable balance between old, landholding interests and progressive urban elites.

For his part, Nelson Rockefeller perceived the need to cautiously cultivate relations with exponents of the Mexican Left in order to stave off the influence of fascism in Mexico, without creating permanent or prepotent alliances with those sectors. Finally, Brazil's entry into World War II, prompted by Nazi submarine attacks on Brazilian ships, has been seen by some analysts as facilitating the elimination of internal conflicts among competing sectors both inside and outside the Vargas regime.¹⁴⁴ One should not underestimate the role of the United States in ensuring that more centrist and even conservative groups would be responsible for stabilizing Latin American socioeconomies during and, it was hoped, after the war, namely, through the state's backing of modernization efforts.

Equally important is the emergence during the second, wartime phase of the Good Neighbor Policy of a hegemonic struggle among various institutions for legitimacy and control over the internal political and cinematic affairs of Brazil and Mexico. It is not difficult to envision how strands of these macro- and microlevels of struggle, acting as the infrastructural counterpart to textual fissuring, might have thwarted a politically and logistically sensitive project such as *It's All True*.

I will now step outside of the "author-text" focus of debate to the ringside, to consider what might have been the institutional causes of the subsequent *suppression*, as well as the suspension, of *It's All True*.

INSTITUTIONAL AGENDAS

The "Wrong Studio"

Among the various habituses, there is little question that RKO Radio Studio wielded the greatest clout over the fate of *It's All True* over most of the project's long time span, if only because it both owned the means and material results of the film's production and retained a measure of veto power over its release. Moreover, there are strong indications that, beyond its economic and discursive functioning as a typically "Hollywood" studio (to the extent that the studios resembled each other in their organization of production, labor practices, and technical and aesthetic standards in the early forties), RKO Radio may simply have been "the wrong studio" to rely on at the time for supervising the production of a film cosponsored with the U.S. government

and shot on location in Latin America. (Not that Welles, Schaefer, and Rockefeller had any choice but to graft the new Latin American project onto the old project, since Welles's RKO contract was still binding.)

To begin with, there was the apprehension of higher-level management and of Floyd Odlum in particular regarding the lingering threat of financial instability that had characterized the studio's operation in the thirties. Without the foresight of the successes brought by the peak in U.S. film attendance during the war, Odlum and others at the top, including Schaefer, must have felt special concern over the loss of European markets and its impact on a studio that had just come out of receivership. This apprehension can only have been exacerbated by the short-term losses experienced in relation to new releases in the period immediately preceding the shooting of *It's All True*, counteracted momentarily by increasing revenue (in absolute and relative terms) in the Keith-Albee-Orpheum theatrical circuit.¹⁴⁵ Regardless of one's assessment of the artistic and social merits of Welles's film work, from the studio's standpoint, producing any of Welles's films was perceived as a potential risk to the studio's financial stability in the short run, even if, as I have argued, *none* of Welles's films could have exerted such a determining influence on RKO's finances as Jewell has suggested.

Second, and concomitantly, the studio made an organizational move away from the unit production system contemplated since the early thirties and introduced by George Schaefer in 1939 and toward more centralized control, of which Charles Koerner's empowered role as studio head in mid-1942 is an emblematic sign. It should be remembered that the unit production system had paved the way for Welles's initial engagement at RKO with his Mercury Productions in tow, and was vital to Welles's autonomy and creative control as director. Concurrent with the dissolution of unit production under Koerner's studio management, one notices a deliberate and sudden decrease in the priority given by the studio to "quality art cinema" as a means of balancing economic with cultural capital. Together with production autonomy, this institutional philosophy had been fundamental to Welles's ability to function in a Hollywood setting and, for a short time, permitted *It's All True* to be valued for its level of aesthetic and technical innovation. There are clear signs, however, that RKO was taking steps to limit this autonomy as early as November 1941, when Welles's second contract with RKO was worded to require everything from prior approval of screenplays and cast approval, to control over editing and the studio's assumption of "control over production if budget is exceeded," in the making of *The Magnificent Ambersons* and *Journey into Fear*.¹⁴⁶

In practice, the new B-oriented, populist bias in film product authored by Koerner did *not* lead RKO toward a self-conscious embracing of cultural and social diversity in casting, characterization, and dramatic material of the kind found in pre-Code Hollywood cinema. Instead, it appears to have been

a formula for achieving above-the-line cost-effectiveness and managerial expediency. Within this framework, and in all fairness to some of Schaefer's and even Shores's complaints, Welles was, so to speak, a "high-maintenance" presence within the studio, albeit for creative and patriotic rather than sheerly selfish reasons.

Moreover, despite Floyd Odum's participation in the Federal Office of Production Management during the war, RKO does not appear to have distinguished itself in demonstrations of patriotism or of cultural pluralism and ethnic tolerance in the face of spreading fascism, preferring instead to excel in technical innovation and the elevation of popular taste in entertainment to reach a growing domestic market.¹⁴⁷ This domestic orientation was not disrupted, but narrowed and refocused toward the "popularesque," by the resignation of George Schaefer, who later became chairman of the War Activities Committee of the Motion Picture Industry.¹⁴⁸ There are also strong signs of political and, by extension, economic disinterest at RKO in altering the representation of subaltern groups on the home front. When the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People met with industry executives in July 1942 (after Schaefer's resignation) to discuss the improvement of African American screen representation, representatives from other studios, such as Walter Wanger (independent, United Artists) and Darryl Zanuck (Twentieth Century-Fox), attended, with visible results a year later in the release of the first all-black feature-length musicals *Stormy Weather* (Twentieth Century-Fox) and *Cabin in the Sky* (MGM).¹⁴⁹ One sees no such initiative at RKO, which chose at its own peril to promote Lupe Vélez as an indomitable and uncouth "Carmelita" in its *Mexican Spitfire* series, while casting Dolores del Río as a "dark lady" in the low-budget *Journey into Fear* (albeit with Mercury's participation).¹⁵⁰

Moreover, two parallel cases of censorship or, at the very least, symptomatic disinterest, on the part of RKO toward socially conscious wartime projects deserve mention here. The first is the discontinuation of Pare Lorentz's *Name, Age, and Occupation* simultaneously with that of *It's All True* around May 1942. Produced under the auspices of the Office of War Information (after the United States Film Service Lorentz had helped to found was disbanded in 1940), this film, designed to encourage enlistment in the armed forces, appears to have been adapted from Lorentz's documentary project *Ecce Omo: Behold the Man*, which focused on industrial labor and unemployment in the heartland. The project was originally produced as a radio play broadcast by CBS as part of a special series. (Lorentz ironically blamed his inability to continue producing for the series on the public controversy generated by the broadcast of Welles's "War of the Worlds," scheduled in the same time slot only one week later.)¹⁵¹ Then, at the war's end in 1945, Adrian Scott submitted a script based on a novel by Richard Brooks about "personal as against

organizational fascism” for consideration at RKO. It was rejected by new RKO president N. Peter Rathvon and eventually supported by Koerner and William Dozier two years later, once the topic appeared to have receded “safely” to the past.¹⁵²

More generally, RKO was not at the forefront (for better or worse) of front-line newsreel production or mainstream fiction wartime propaganda of the kind analyzed by Dana Polan and Thomas Doherty (here, Warner’s, MGM, and even Columbia seem to have taken the lead).¹⁵³ And even though it released several of Disney’s Good Neighbor products (including *Saludos Amigos*) along with three Pathé-produced shorts on Nazi activity in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile (directed by Julien Bryan, 1941),¹⁵⁴ the studio did not show great interest in inter-American representations in fictionalized form beyond the ahistorical *Mexican Spitfire* series in production since 1939—which was too low-budget and spartan to compete with the lavishly choreographed and decorated Twentieth Century-Fox musicals featuring the highest-paid star in Hollywood, Carmen Miranda. By comparison, Fox had a long history of courting the Spanish-language market and was the only studio to produce films exclusively for Spanish-language release during the early thirties.¹⁵⁵

The relative absence of Good Neighbor subjects being produced on the RKO studio lot is echoed by its relatively limited presence in Latin America in the form of theatrical enterprises and foreign offices compared with other studios. For example, although RKO maintained regional offices in Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, and Buenos Aires, it was the only U.S. studio that did not establish branches in the key provincial cities of Argentina, a critical South American market during the thirties.¹⁵⁶ This low profile was not lost on Latin American critics. Carioca critic Enéas Viany, for instance, chastised RKO for its failure to publicize its Latin American release of *Citizen Kane*: “We wish this film had been released by ‘Fox,’ which certainly would have lavished the same publicity on it that it has on several of its ‘pineapples’ in color. . . . RKO did not have the intelligence to give it the distinction it deserved, and the exhibitors let it go almost unnoticed, after spending loads of money promoting bonafide ‘poison.’”¹⁵⁷

Apart from its postwar marriage of convenience with the Mexican film industry and market (via the Churubusco studio complex), RKO’s generally noncommittal stance toward the Latin American film market was seriously encouraged by Rockefeller’s and Sarnoff’s departures from the board. Against a prevailing posture of fiscal conservatism and political isolation and detachment, one must take account of the crucial role played by political economic authorship in the demise of *It’s All True*, both in the “negative” sense of Odium and Koerner seeking to disempower and oust Schaefer and his upper-level allies in spring of 1942, and in the “positive” sense of Breen and Schaefer backing the project in its multiple forms while Rockefeller and

Sarnoff were still on the RKO board. The departure of the latter two investors, coupled with that of Schaefer and Breen, left Welles with virtually no support to complete the project from management inside the studio.

In questioning whether RKO was the appropriate studio to partner with the OCIAA in the production of *It's All True*, I do not mean to argue that the studio's reticence toward multicultural initiatives, either materially or politically, is to blame per se for the discontinuation of the film. Rather, the lack of a strong precedent and international infrastructure made it easier for those opposed to the project inside the studio to construe Welles's expedition as "excessive" in relation to the studio's resources during the war. Moreover, the protagonism of Koerner and Odum in the board changes and Mercury's expulsion begs further investigation of the ideological tensions within RKO as a bicoastal organization. Joseph Biroc remarked in an interview on the differences within the location crew between people from New York, such as Lynn Shores, and the personnel hailing from Hollywood, who seem to have been more sympathetic toward Welles's approach to producing the film.¹⁵⁸ The inverse appears to hold for the stance taken by upper-level management back in the United States, with greater sympathy expressed toward the project by the New York office than by Koerner and his minions in Los Angeles.¹⁵⁹ This, too, would change, upon N. Peter Rathvon's appointment as RKO president. In addition to maintaining a friendly relationship with Koerner, Rathvon appears to have been firmly intent upon extinguishing RKO's commitment to *It's All True* at a pivotal moment, following Welles's return from Brazil. In a letter to Koerner, whom he addresses informally as "Charlie," Rathvon states: "You may be sure my every effort will be *to get rid of this property and Orson Welles* if there is any way to do it."¹⁶⁰

The Benign Neglect of the OCIAA

While Welles and collaborators expressed frustration toward Shores's poisoning of the waters (of which they were witnessing only the residue) throughout the shoot, they treated RKO's reticence largely as an unavoidable nuisance. Rather than arm themselves for the definitive battle ahead, which in any case took place when they were out of reach on location in Fortaleza, they relied trustingly on the OCIAA, both in Rio and back in Washington, for support. Equally noteworthy to the shakeup within RKO is the impact upon the project of shifts in policy priorities and foci within the OCIAA under Nelson Rockefeller's helmsmanship.

Welles lost a strong ally when, during summer 1942, John Hay Whitney resigned (apparently against Rockefeller's wishes) to supervise intelligence activities for the central government, and was replaced by Francis Alstock.¹⁶¹ Alstock appears to have shown interest in supporting the project following Welles's return to the United States from Brazil. However, these gestures

could not carry enough weight without stronger initiative from Rockefeller, who appears to have responded in a noncommittal (although not unfriendly) fashion to solicitations for help by Welles and others (notably, Samuel Goldwyn) in resolving the RKO impasse.¹⁶² Although he appears to have met with Rathvon to discuss the matter in fall 1942,¹⁶³ one can see how Rockefeller's recent withdrawal from the RKO board under unsavory circumstances might have deterred him from taking aggressive action toward the studio; those lines had already been drawn and did not show any signs of loosening in late 1942, when Welles approached him with a final, personal plea for help.

More significant in Rockefeller's reasoning, however, must have been the direction taken by the war itself, now being waged on several fronts. A new military mobilization had been undertaken in North Africa under Operation "Torch," with the Atlantic Ocean gaining in strategic importance as a result; and the solidification of U.S. relations with Brazil, so vital to Atlantic defense, had been achieved. More immediately, since Welles's arrival in Brazil, the favorable relations with twenty republics announced at the January Conference of Foreign Ministers had been acted upon, and both Mexico and Brazil had entered the war in solidarity with the Allied cause. In the meantime, the still-neutral Argentina had been effectively isolated both politically and cinematically by a sharp reduction in the shipment of film stock to Buenos Aires to be used in the production of Argentine features.¹⁶⁴ This automatically reduced Hollywood's source of competition in the general Latin American market, since Argentina had been, at the outbreak of World War II, the most prolific producer and aggressive distributor of Spanish-language films in Latin America.¹⁶⁵

Given the OCIAA's overall expansion of trade and investment within a framework of hemispheric cooperation, Argentina had to be replaced by another Latin nation as the "most-preferred" recipient of U.S. film technologies to ensure at least the *appearance* of the United States' recognition and respect for Latin sovereignty over cultural production. There were only two possible choices for replacement, given the state of film industrial development in Latin America during the war. Brazil's market was larger than Mexico's and therefore important to maintain as a consumer of Hollywood (over Brazilian) films, but it was Portuguese-speaking, which automatically introduced an impediment where distribution of Brazilian films to Spanish-speaking countries was concerned.¹⁶⁶ Mexico, with its smaller national market, considerable array of (partly Hollywood-trained) technical and artistic talent, budding state interest in the film industry, and geographic proximity (and hence susceptibility to scrutiny by U.S. film interests) was a much more likely candidate. As early as May 1942, Nelson Rockefeller (acting on behalf of the OCIAA) was planning to launch the mammoth Prescinradio project to finance the Mexican film industry through intergovernmental cooperation.¹⁶⁷

Thus, Welles's presence was critical in Brazil as long as it was still necessary to fend off the Argentine and German pro-Axis "propaganda" then infiltrating the Brazilian market, and as long as Getúlio Vargas had yet to firmly commit strategic and economic resources to inter-American cooperation. Once these short-term goals had been accomplished, and film resources had been rechanneled to jump-start the Mexican Golden Age, Welles's presence and the promotion of Brazilian culture on the hemispheric screen might have seemed somewhat redundant from a foreign policy perspective. Indeed, the OCIAA may very well have considered that Brazil, together with the Southern Cone, had been adequately addressed in commercial film that year with the smash release of Walt Disney's *Saludos Amigos* in June.

This revamping of strategic priorities still does not explain why Rockefeller was not interested in salvaging "My Friend Bonito" as an OCIAA short for release, which leaves the question I posed in chapter 3 unanswered: Why the eclipsing of Mexico in relation to *It's All True*? Given the expansion of U.S. economic and political hegemony in the hemisphere through the application of the Good Neighbor Policy during World War II, the events within the habituses of RKO and OCIAA as cosponsors remain more significant than any possible disapproval shown toward *It's All True* on the part of the Mexican and Brazilian state apparatuses and film industries, notwithstanding the necessary approval of the project by those apparatuses at least for activities conducted during location shooting.

CHANGING TRENDS WITHIN THE CONTEMPORARY FILMMAKING CONTEXT

Added scrutiny of the film's exotext, along with the previously mentioned Lorentz and Flaherty rejections, reveals two relevant changes in the directions taken by documentary film during the war. First, direct government sponsorship of documentaries, which had reached unprecedented proportions during the New Deal administration in the thirties, clearly continued during World War II. However, the elimination of the USFS in 1940 by a conservative Congress could help to explain why documentaries funded by government coffers were changing in their production strategy and rhetorical content. Indeed, the war seems to have provoked fundamental alterations in the government perception of and control over the films it funded, paralleling the centralization and tightening of production control inside RKO Pictures. Whereas filmmakers in the thirties had enjoyed a measure of autonomy and were respected for their aesthetic criteria in determining the shape of a film, the government (in general) seems to have adopted a more vigilant approach to state sponsorship, leading to the instrumentalization of documentary as a means of *official*, rather than popular, communication.

Concomitantly, messages destined for domestic consumption were strongly informed by the global interests and security of the modern nation-state and interpellated (albeit less patronizingly than in the Good Neighbor shorts) the viewer as a *subject*, as well as citizen, of that nation-state. Therefore, the social differentiation of that subject was preferably shown only to the extent that it was useful to state interests (such as women toiling in the munitions factories).

Second, the movement of political documentary away from “social documentary” (of the type produced by Welles’s contemporaries Joris Ivens, Paul Strand, and Pare Lorentz) permitted the emergence of various instrumentalized forms, including what Hans Richter called “propaganda” and the “essayistic film.”¹⁶⁸ Only the essayistic film appears to have retained possibilities for the exercise of authorship in the realm of documentary, since it involves the inscription of a personal voice. At the same time, the flexibility within the field of “soft propaganda” for essayistic expression remains unclear and highly subject to the whims of political economic authorship.

Whether or not Welles was aware of the implications of these sea changes in the realm of documentary is unclear. Yet his interstitial positioning in relation to the various groups involved in pro-Allied filmmaking—independent, government sponsored, and industrial—may not have helped him obtain institutional support for the project, once relations became strained with RKO. The awkward fit of existing commercial distribution venues within the United States (which were no longer showing feature-length documentaries such as *Nanook of the North* and *The River*) with the social and aesthetic discourses encompassed in *It’s All True*, not to mention the film’s discursive “fissuring” in other ways, must also have presented a stumbling block for RKO, in that such features brought the film further out of the mainstream and, from the studio’s standpoint, viability as a distributable work.

CODA

It is truly a pity that such a personal “affair,” such as my own with RKO-Radio, should have been made public. The explanation for this rupture is simple. There was a complete upheaval in the management of RKO-Radio. My friends in that studio were fired, ceding their posts, precisely, to my enemies, the men who were so viscerally opposed to the release of my film Citizen Kane. A series of misunderstandings and conflicts between Mercury Productions and RKO came about as a result, all rooted in a politics of disloyalty.

ORSON WELLES¹⁶⁹

Quite eloquently put, but with all due respect, can it really be said in retrospect that this was just a “personal affair”? In this chapter, I have attempted to redirect the readers’ attention away from Orson Welles as the principal

victim and culprit of the demise of *It's All True* to the broader institutional context in which the film was produced and would have been distributed. To better understand the distinct agendas of these institutions, I have tried to consider them as habituses, each with its own social protocol and material resources as well as time sensitivity with regard to the war effort and socioeconomic transformation within national boundaries. The foremost agenda of each habitus in reaction to the war, and the resulting position adopted toward Welles and *It's All True*, should be seen as the result of human agency, taking the form of political-economic authorship and informed by ideologies and the clash of deeply rooted philosophical biases with emergent perspectives operating both within and outside of institutional confines. Thus, in assessing the causality of the suspension, it is not a matter of weighing realpolitik and pragmatic considerations *against* ideological filters but of seeing how ideology and accompanying wartime anxieties shaped the very boundaries and criteria of what came to be represented as realpolitikal, practical concerns and objective factors "beyond anyone's control."

If one can detect a single overriding ideological concern that united the various institutional habituses—RKO Radio Studio, the OCIAA, the DIP, the Mexican cultural and educational ministry—at this pivotal moment, it is the delicate balance that was to be maintained between spawning and extending modernization in the hemisphere (in advance of, and defense against, the Axis powers) and controlling the effects of popular participation in modernity. Underlying the class-bound and racially oriented, and even the technocratic, objections to Welles's inclusive transcultural approach to representing Latin American history and culture is the reluctance to genuinely share modernity, in its fetishized form as commodity, with marginal, unasimilated "others." One also notes a shifting balance of power *among* the organizations involved during this pivotal time period.

As for Orson Welles and his remaining ability to deflect and overcome the obstacles put in his way by wartime circumstance and disgruntled studio executives, one can only cite his underestimation or unawareness of the impact of political shifts on the ideological stakes and preferred strategies attached to documentary filmmaking within the hemisphere. In addition, he may have overestimated the ability of his crew to adapt to their foreign surroundings and shown excessive diffidence toward RKO's heightened desire for control at a foreign location: He and his Mercury team apparently assumed that they could enjoy the same autonomy and immunity from micro-management during production off-site in Brazil as they had in Hollywood. At the same time, it is clear that the pressures being exerted simultaneously upon Welles from the various habituses were multiple and contradictory, and in all probability impossible for any director in his position to effectively rec-

oncile. In setting his priorities, he chose to ally himself with the progressive elements of the Vargas regime and with the subjects of his film, and counted on benefactors who, through no premeditation of their own, vanished from the scene. While this posture might have cost him the completion and release of *It's All True*, it is the factor most responsible for the survival of the film in popular memory and its resonance with new, alternative filmmaking initiatives to be undertaken decades later.

Chapter 7

The Legacy of a Phantom Film, 1945–2003

Orson Welles's surrender of the nitrate footage back to RKO in 1946 did not spell the end of the film in either body or soul. Untethered from the text-in-the-making, the film object and the traces of the production event were parceled out, revalued, and reframed to suit well-wishers and bounty hunters at various locations in the hemisphere. For those interested in pursuing its filmic reincarnation, the very same features that have impeded the consolidation of film elements into an integral work—its indeterminate structure, lack of definitive syntax, and absence of suture, the embeddedness of the authorial scoring in the work in progress—enhanced its ease of appropriation for a range of projects, including several undertaken by Welles himself. Contrary to what one might expect from its diminished support for the Brazilian shoot and increased skepticism, if not outright disingenuousness, toward Welles's efforts to complete the film, RKO considered alternative commercial applications for portions of the footage even as Welles made earnest attempts to assemble it into a cohesive whole. Bits of footage and script ideas pertaining to various episodes of *It's All True* can be discerned in films subsequently produced by the studio between 1945 and 1956.

A clear distinction needs to be made, however, between the film's elusive survival in these appropriations and its trajectory as a time-sensitive project, for which nitrate negative and written sketches continued to exist. In the end, the studio's pirating of *It's All True* had the effect of precluding its resuscitation along the lines envisioned by either the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) or Welles himself. Just as gravely, it diverted public attention from the existence—and unblinking neglect—of the original elements in studio vaults.

THE CELLULOID HOSTAGE

An inventory conducted of the abandoned footage in late 1952 noted the presence of black-and-white negative corresponding to twenty-one reels, or 16,793 feet of positive footage, of “My Friend Bonito” in the RKO studio vault; black-and-white negative corresponding to fifteen reels, or 13,978 feet of positive film, of “Jangadeiros”; and seven reels of black-and-white and one reel of color positive film, or 5,481 feet, corresponding to Technicolor negative of “Carnaval,” in addition to 200,000 feet of uncut Technicolor negative and 50,000 feet of music sound negative shot for the “Carnaval” episode.¹ (This contrasts with the 45 cans, or 45,000 feet, of black-and-white nitrate positive inventoried by José Noriega in late 1944.)² Yet in 1953, upon seeing former RKO vice president Phil Reisman at the 21 Club in New York, cinematographer George Fanto recalled being told that no one knew what had happened to the footage of *It’s All True*. Fanto was keenly interested in locating the footage because Brazilian entrepreneur and cofounder of the São Paulo Vera Cruz studios, Francisco Matarazzo Sobrinho, with whom he was lunching that day, had offered to finance the film’s completion.³

Despite Welles’s previous postproduction efforts, and excepting the occasional scavenger hunt by RKO employees for atmospheric stock material, the nitrate footage was left to languish, mostly untouched, in RKO’s vaults until 1957, when the acquisition of RKO’s archive and lot by Desilu Studios brought it under new custody. Then, in 1967, following the acquisition of Desilu by Gulf and Western (the parent company of Paramount Pictures), all the nitrate footage that remained on the former RKO lot came under the jurisdiction of Paramount.⁴ Nearly all the footage was still in the vaults, while some Technicolor footage of “Carnaval” and the Rio sequences of “Jangadeiros” (both amounting to about 5,400 feet), along with black-and-white scenes from “My Friend Bonito” on nitrate positive appear to have made it into Paramount’s stock film library. Ironically, the accessibility of these latter portions may very well have been the result of the earlier RKO inventory, conducted for the sake of salvaging and recycling rather than preservation.

The existence of the surviving footage remained a public mystery until Charles Higham commented on the positive “stock” footage at Paramount in his much-debated article on *It’s All True* in *Sight and Sound* in 1970.⁵ However, there are clear signs that Desi Arnaz (a personal friend of Welles, who himself cashed in on the post-“Good Neighbor” wave in the fifties with his popular television series, *I Love Lucy*) and a handful of RKO and Paramount employees were already aware of the existence of the nitrate negative in the sixties.⁶ Hazel Marshall, in charge of the Paramount film library at the time of the Desilu acquisition by Gulf and Western, recalls being instructed to remove and destroy any “Carnaval” footage involving a “tall, dark man”; and

film critic and writer-producer Bill Krohn reported in *Cahiers du Cinéma* in 1985 that a Paramount editor, Tony Pellegrino, had done a provisional assembly of roughly 30,000 feet of *It's All True* footage on safety negative in the late sixties.⁷ The instructions to Marshall are especially ironic, since it is rumored that Paramount disposed of the “Carnaval” footage in an effort to avoid legal entanglements with a performer who by then had become a popular film and television star in Brazil: although “dark” enough in complexion, the late Grande Othelo, as any Brazilian knows, was diminutive rather than tall in physical stature. Thus, in 1993, the documentary reconstruction team was pleasantly surprised to find that a few scenes prominently featuring Grande Othelo remained in their entirety on Technicolor negative, possibly due to an erroneous description of his physical appearance by studio executives eager to avoid an international lawsuit.⁸

For his part, Othelo stated in 1989 that he did not feel that he was owed any rights to his image by either Welles or RKO but was suffering instead from the “sentimental debt” that the film’s suspension, and consequently Welles’s failure to return to Brazil as promised, had caused. On the eve of his departure from Rio in 1942, Welles reportedly had vowed to his Brazilian collaborators and supporters that he would not return without the film in hand, ready for release.

Unbeknownst to Othelo, other Brazilian participants, and the principals of the original project, reel upon reel of the Technicolor nitrate negative (nearly 200,000 feet of the footage in the 1952 inventory mentioned earlier) was cast into the Pacific Ocean by Paramount sometime in the late sixties or early seventies, quite possibly based on the aforementioned legal, as well as putatively practical, motives, such as the natural physical deterioration of the three-strip nitrate negative. In the meantime, efforts at preserving the surviving nitrate material, both Technicolor and black-and-white, were also under way. The American Film Institute began taking an interest in the film in the late sixties, partly in response to inquiries made by Desi Arnaz as to the possibility of printing some of the nitrate negative.⁹

In 1981, Paramount executive Fred Chandler accidentally came upon a large cache of black-and-white nitrate footage (bringing the total of retrieved footage to 309 cans of negative and 5 cans of unidentified positive film, or more than 150,000 feet), and a special preservation project was launched at the UCLA Film and Television Archive with support from the American Film Institute, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the encouragement and initiative of Chandler and Richard Wilson.¹⁰ Wilson’s efforts to reconstruct the “Jangadeiros” episode (the most complete and well preserved of the three that had gone into production) began in 1986.¹¹ Those efforts culminated in the 1993 documentary reconstruction produced by Les Films Balenciaga and released by Paramount Pictures: *It's All True, Based on an Unfinished Film by Orson Welles*, directed by Richard Wilson, Myron Meisel, and

Bill Krohn. The production team was greatly assisted by the advocacy and good faith of Michael Schlesinger, then working in nontheatrical distribution at Paramount.

Where was Orson Welles in relation to these later efforts to salvage the footage? In June 1958, following the release of his film *Touch of Evil* and one year after Desilu's acquisition of the RKO studio lot, Welles lamented in an interview conducted with *Cahiers du Cinéma* that the "Jangadeiros" footage was permanently lost, having been "burned" by RKO.¹² Despite this statement, and the fact that he spent much of the sixties and early seventies in Europe, Welles's close contact and collaborations with Arnaz and Lucille Ball (whom he had once considered for a role in *Smiler with a Knife*) make it questionable that he would not have known of the film's whereabouts, or of Arnaz's efforts in the midsixties to have some of the footage printed. Adding to the puzzle of Welles's changing public stance toward *It's All True* is the fact that although he mentioned in the 1958 *Cahiers* interview that he had spent "months and months, [even] years trying to salvage the film,"¹³ upon being asked years later by friend and cameraman Gary Graver whether he would not like to return with Gary to South America, Welles replied simply: "It's a trap."¹⁴ This non sequitur is more complex and less dismissive than might at first appear, especially when one considers the many audiovisual homages Welles made to *It's All True* in his later work, including *Touch of Evil*.

It was then up to Welles's longtime collaborator and business partner Richard Wilson to take the initiative, together with Fred Chandler, to begin the arduous process of preservation, which continues to this day. As of this writing, efforts are under way at the UCLA Film and Television Archive to preserve more than 100,000 feet of remaining nitrate footage pertaining to all three episodes of the film, on both acetate 35mm film and digital videotape (see appendix 2 for details on the current status of this footage).

Parallel to these reversals in the fate of the work in progress, there have been various sightings and piracies of, and homages to, *It's All True*, in addition to its legacy as a hypotext in subsequent waves of neorealist filmmaking. While these uses rarely bring us closer to the film's original shape and content, they attest to the film's historical effectivity and symbolic power as a creative effort and an alternative intervention in the course being taken by inter-American relations during World War II. In reviewing these appropriations, it is important to distinguish between strategies of preservation and dissemination versus what might be termed strategies of concealment and containment. The preservationist approach, undertaken by Welles and mostly Brazilian filmmakers of his own and later generations, has tended to yield "hypertexts" (like the "wraparound script" mentioned in chapter 2), whereas the industrial efforts at camouflaging the project to avoid controversy while salvaging it, have achieved little beyond the dismemberment, cultural and ideological reorientation, and misnaming of the footage and pro-

textual material (such as the scripts still belonging to RKO). Three basic paths of appropriation can be identified that have yielded different consequences for the film's legacy: its invocation as an event and lost object by Welles and others, its creative resignification without losing sight of the original project, and its reduction to the least common denominators of setting and generic action to facilitate its use as "scrap material" in a process of industrial cannibalization—just as the detritus from slaughtered animals might be used to fabricate glue and celluloid, and celluloid might be used in turn to produce household objects. These paths, blazed on the tenuous boundary between endotext and exotext, can be seen as leading alternately to the film's retextualization and a rekindling of public curiosity; or to what might be called "textophagy"—the devouring of elements for the sake of generating another text, over and above preserving *It's All True*, and leaving little trace of it as an artifact, a historical experience, or a conceptual blueprint.

RKO'S PIRATING OF *IT'S ALL TRUE*

Notwithstanding its reluctance to release *It's All True* during the 1942–43 season as a wartime feature cosponsored by the OCIAA and signed by Orson Welles, RKO did not immediately relegate the roughly 300,000 feet of shot footage and script material it owned to the "marked for destruction" sector of its film vaults. Instead, even as Welles continued to fight for the project's completion and rights to the footage, the studio began exploring its own means of salvaging scenes from the film so as to obtain at least a modest return on its investment. As early as September 1943, when Welles was submitting his revised screenplay, RKO management was projecting the costs of completing the film according to Welles's plan as excessive and was therefore contemplating the assignment of a different director to the project.¹⁵

Clearly, and especially bearing in mind RKO's pivotal role in the project's suspension, any use tailored to the studio's postwar priorities and industrial procedures would diverge significantly from any project that either Welles, or even the OCIAA, had in mind. These divergences have borne ideological as well as formal and semantic implications for the interpretation of the surviving footage.

At the same time, not all the footage pertaining to the three shot episodes of *It's All True* was of equal value in the studio's eyes. Not surprisingly, in view of the austerity of its visual compositions and the distinctive ethnographic character of its image content, "Jangadeiros" was the one episode that was left to languish in obscurity until presumably it would have jellied and been disposed of, sharing the chemically predestined fate of all nitrate footage. The earliest of RKO's piracies, undertaken only one year after Welles's return from Brazil, involved the "rehabilitation" of portions of the "Carnaval" footage in the form of a more conventional Good Neighbor musical spec-

tacle, with particular attention devoted to the Cassino da Urca grand finale, which featured the North American Ray Ventura and orchestra. (Ironically, this was the sequence that had generated the most controversy between Welles and RKO over production costs, and was VP Phil Reisman's "last concession" to Welles before the U.S. crew was sent home.) RKO's plans in the short run included a "remake" of *Flying Down to Rio*, titled *Carnival in Rio*, to star Carmen and Aurora Miranda, as well as Fred Astaire, and includes Welles's Cassino da Urca footage as part of a "show within a show" called "Brazil to Broadway."¹⁶ Framing it in this manner, the studio could have built on Miranda's tried-and-true box office success at Twentieth Century-Fox and as a pan-cultural icon more generally, while the North American spectator would be "spared" the level of cultural immersion demanded by Welles's presentation. A particularly egregious example of the misappropriation of documentary material and cultural reductionism occurs with RKO's later plans to include portions of the "Carnaval" footage as *background* material, together with footage from a feature suggestively titled *African Splendor* in a musical spectacle.¹⁷

It is interesting to note that the proponents of the earlier "solutions" remained in denial of ever having received a shooting script from Welles, even though he had just submitted his own revised wraparound version in September 1943 with what amounted to the OCIAA's endorsement.¹⁸ RKO continued to use this "lack of a script" as a reason to delay the completion of the film as Welles planned it. As it happened, portions of the "Carnaval" black-and-white documentary shot by Harry Wild and Joseph Biroc appear to have been sold as "stock footage" for use in *The March of Time*,¹⁹ while the Cassino da Urca finale is reported as having been incorporated into the compilation musical revue *Panamericana*, directed by John Auer and released by the studio in 1945.

Since the setting for the finale was a posh Rio nightclub, a locale that, as Herivelto Martins and Grande Othelo complained years later, was stringently segregated along racial lines,²⁰ sadly, it is also one of the few scenes in "Carnaval" that does not explore the festivities mainly from the standpoint of the local Afro-Brazilian community, an aspect that undoubtedly made it more suitable for generic usage in the eyes of RKO management. Two separate descriptions of *Panamericana* indicate that, in particular, the "Panamérica e Folga Nêgo" number (see figure 24, page 118) was used to spice up the denouement of the film. This excision and splicing of a scene, which in the original version would have been constructed in dialogical relation to other venues and performances in "Carnaval," is illustrative of the extract-and-sample approach to Latin American representation in much inter-American cinema during the Good Neighbor era.

In the meantime, significant use was being made of the scripts, if not the footage, pertaining to "The Story of Jazz" and "My Friend Bonito." The for-

mer was adapted and modified for use in the RKO feature *New Orleans*, directed by Arthur Lubin (with a screenplay based on an “original story” by Elliot Paul and Herbert Biberman) and released in 1946;²¹ the latter found its way into *The Brave One*, directed by the King brothers and released in 1956. From the accounts of *New Orleans* given by Krin Gabbard and Kurt Jerde, curator of the Louis Armstrong collection at the Tulane Jazz Archive, even though *New Orleans* might superficially resemble “The Story of Jazz” in the geographic trajectory covered by its plotline, it does not feature Louis Armstrong very prominently, nor does it appear to have given much satisfaction to “Satchmo” himself.²² Rather, it appears to have been nothing more than an attempt by the studio to “recycle” its properties and capitalize on the representation of African Americans through musical performance that, by the midforties, had become quite accepted within the industry generally, especially at Twentieth Century-Fox and MGM, as long as the racial segregation of screen space was preserved. More interesting, perhaps, are the equally strong remnants of the plotline and approach to showcasing different jazz forms from “The Story of Jazz” appearing in the fictionalized “life trajectory” of Bill “Bojangles” Robinson in Twentieth Century-Fox’s musical hit *Stormy Weather*, which was produced around the time Welles was working for that studio as both actor and producer for *Jane Eyre*.²³

The Brave One, which, like “My Friend Bonito,” narrates the friendship between a young boy and a fierce bull, is of interest for the controversy that was sparked regarding the screenwriter’s true identity in the wake of the Academy Award the film earned in the screenwriting category for 1956. The controversy began when then politically blacklisted Dalton Trumbo, who had been working under a pseudonym, failed to accept the award in person. This led to a widely publicized search for the “true author,” accompanied by suspicions that the screenplay, which evidently had been adapted from the original Fante-Foster collaborative screenplay for “My Friend Bonito,” had been plagiarized. All this appears to have been a cause for amusement for Orson Welles, who not only identified the original “author” as Robert Flaherty in a press interview but himself would explore the issue of authorship and plagiarism in art twenty years later in *F for Fake*.

Insofar as plagiarism denotes appropriation and dissimulation, or, alternately, inventiveness through mimesis for the artist/performer (an interpretation given by Welles in *F for Fake*), *The Brave One* illustrates the extent to which plagiarism could become a *modus operandi* for low-budget studio film production, legitimated by the studios’ legal ownership of script material and footage, and euphemized as the productive recycling of outdated or abandoned projects. Viewed in this light, what is more disturbing than the otherwise average product *The Brave One* are the apparent signs of the studio’s appropriation of some of Welles’s efforts to salvage the project following his return from South America, namely, the basic concept for the “Michael

Guard” scripts involving two Euro-Americans, one of them a woman spy who uncovers the existence of a fifth column in Brazil. Undoubtedly, the linkage established in an earlier version of these scripts between southern white racism and fascism in Nazi Germany would have proved too risky for RKO management at this juncture, especially given the degree of apprehension already expressed by RKO executives toward the distribution of “Carnaval” in the American South. However, there is a notable resonance between the later version of the “Michael Guard” script and the basic plot and setting of the high-budget *Notorious*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock and released with considerable success by RKO in 1946.

In *Notorious*, a romance between two American spies, played by Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman, develops over the course of their attempts to infiltrate and disable a ring of Nazi collaborators (a family of German “exiles”) residing in a Rio de Janeiro mansion.²⁴ The Brazilian urban setting is reduced to a scenic backdrop, with many of the scenes shot in matte process and the relationship between the American characters taking center stage. In Welles’s version, however, the spy narrative was to become a convenient pretext for using most, if not all, of the Rio footage for “Carnaval,” which he appears to have still intended to edit into sequences, albeit more self-contained and exploited ostensibly for the entertainment of both the spectator and “Michael” (as the spectator-in-the-text) than had been originally planned.

At the very least, these RKO appropriations of *It’s All True* are illustrative of the tenuous relationship obtaining in U.S. industrial cinema between source material, its adaptation within a screenplay, and its eventual translation into an audiovisual text. This tenuousness exceeds the inevitable modifications that are brought about in the transition from one medium of expression (the written word or mental concept) to another (audiovisual representation) that is characteristic of any cinematic enterprise; it is only partly attributable to an industrial mode of production involving a division of labor (screenwriting as separate from direction and postproduction) and control placed in the hands of an executive producer or studio head. RKO’s treatment of *It’s All True* is at once a testament to the “use value” of the creative concepts and their material expression in the work in progress, and an indicator, like the suspension itself, of the boundaries of intercultural and racial representation in U.S. commercial film.

If a consistent pattern can be identified in RKO’s recontextualization and resignification of components of the work in progress, it is, first, a neutralization (through manipulations along both paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes of construction) of intercultural dialogue and subaltern protagonism, coupled with the elimination of any commentary pertaining to the historico-cultural experience of subaltern communities across the hemisphere. This is subtended, secondly, by an aesthetic of simulation (with regard to geocultural setting and the spatiotemporal relations obtaining between differ-

ent footage sources), with an emphasis on postproduction, as opposed to production, as the determining moment in the creative process and in the representation of foreign locations (as exemplified in the matte process shots that appeared in many Good Neighbor musicals.) As a result, the images and plot elements come to be stripped not only of their potential emic significance and historico-cultural context of articulation but of the messages that were to be encoded in the original text, not to mention the general ethos surrounding the production strategies adumbrated in the work in progress.

Occurring at intervals of three, four, and fourteen years after the production of *It's All True*, these piracies by RKO were released at historical moments in which profound alterations had occurred regarding industry-state relations, the stakes placed on hemispheric solidarity (becoming much more economic rather than overtly political in nature), and ethnic, gender, and labor relations within the United States. Moreover, these appropriations did not exactly precipitate the vindication of Welles as a capable and daring filmmaker who in the eyes of his collaborators had been willing to place the interests of the nation-state before personal gain. RKO's manipulation of the material combined with this new domestic and international contexts of reception effectively neutralized the potential social and aesthetic impact of the original work in progress—especially where the uses of documentary and the copresence on the screen of different foreign cultures and racial groups were concerned. In the end, this brand of textophagy might have benefited the studio's coffers, and perhaps the careers of a few directors and screenwriters, but certainly not the lives of the author(s) and protagonists of *It's All True*. Cloaked in more conventional narrative structures and generic matrices, these excerpts were hardly intended to reference *It's All True*; indeed, they are likely to flit by unnoticed by the uninformed eye and thus do not even function as “quotations.” In effect, the studio expressly made efforts to camouflage or downplay these piracies so that the source would not be immediately recognizable to the viewer.²⁵

Nor can any of these appropriations can be taken as an earnest attempt by RKO to rehabilitate its repertoire with the directives of Good Neighbor Policy in mind. Although Latin America is thematized, the degree of parity and interaction between genuinely “Latin American” protagonists and actors and their North American counterparts is minimal and does not even compare with the awkward and tension-fraught match of Mexican actress Lupe Vélez with her American husband “Dennis Lindsay” (played by various Anglo-American actors) in RKO's by then discontinued *Mexican Spitfire* series. RKO was not alone, as most of the studio system had interpreted the Good Neighbor policy as an economically expeditious yet transient and tenuous flirtation with the region to the south, that would soon be displaced by the U.S. Latina/o-focused “social problem” cycle of the fifties and by the

memorable *I Love Lucy* television series. The vestiges of Good Neighbor themes, sets, and talent were translated by other studios, alternately into comedic parodies of the inter-American musical (*Copacabana*, dir. Alfred E. Green, United Artists, 1947, and starring Groucho Marx and Carmen Miranda) and romantic comedies featuring the courtship and marriage of handsome scions of the Latin American landed aristocracy, the archetypal “Latin lover” (played mostly by Ricardo Montalbán), to fair-skinned, financially independent Anglo-American beauties, such as Esther Williams and Lana Turner in *Neptune’s Daughter* (dir. Edward Buzzell, MGM, 1949) and *Latin Lovers* (dir. Mervyn LeRoy, MGM, 1953), respectively. The association of Latin America with leisure activities was thus retained, without ostensibly offending Latin American elites, and without provoking more than slight ripples in the application of generic codes.

STORYTELLING AND THE INVOCATION OF *IT’S ALL TRUE* BY ORSON WELLES

If RKO’s piracies of *It’s All True* can be compared to organ transplants from an anonymous donor, in which the dislocated parts, if successfully resituated, will begin once again to function synchronously with their new surroundings, becoming integral to the “whole,” with the “donor” soon forgotten, Orson Welles’s attempts to rescue the film through textophagy involve the recuperation of the lost object through metonymy and quotation, which might be compared to a strategy he often used in relation to his own facial physiognomy in theatrical and cinematic performance: artificial or theatrical prosthesis, to increase rather than conceal the intensity and changes required by creative expression. Just as donning false noses and epidermises allowed Welles to take on significantly different personae while remaining easily recognizable to the public—thereby disclosing the fact of the prosthesis to any viewer who had seen him in other performances—his recuperation of the lost work in progress does not involve erasure and forgetting, achieved through the decontextualization and compositional simulation (by way of suturing) of dismembered elements. Instead, it speaks to the reclamation and remembrance by way of bricolage of the text he had originally envisioned. The imported elements might seem incongruous or even produce a rupturing of the diegetic flow in their new textual surroundings, yet they retain the indelible trace of their primary loci of enunciation and articulation: Orson Welles and *It’s All True*.

Put differently, RKO’s appropriations and Welles’s attempts at reappropriation involve a process of resignification: in both cases, one is speaking of hypertextuality rather than textual reconstruction or preservation. Yet, given their fundamental differences in intent and in their relationship (including differing possibilities of access) to the original materials, this resignification orients the viewer/interpreter in dramatically different ways toward the de-

coding of the image as historico-cultural sign, not to mention the level of semiotic complexity read into that sign. RKO would not have been interested in *It's All True* at all if it were not for its easy access to the material elements. In contrast, Welles appears committed to rescuing aspects of *It's All True* in his later works, especially its aesthetic concepts and themes, even though—and precisely because—he was unable to retain access to its elements.

One notes an evolution in strategy and the dynamic relation obtaining between new signifiers, the context of enunciation, and the possible referents for this enunciation over the course of Welles's quotations and invocations. The first of these efforts was the *Hello Americans* radio series, in which Welles took different plot elements (such as the “anatomy of samba”), production strategies (consultation with local experts), and musical compositions he planned to use in the film and worked them into educational radio programs directed at a national U.S. audience. These are the most direct forms of appropriation by Welles: an unambiguous, organic relationship exists between the new signifiers, their context of enunciation (inter-American radio programs), and projected listeners (those who were meant to gain an understanding of Latin America while supporting the Allied cause). All programs had to be predominantly monolingualistic given the reliance on auditory rather than visual means of transmission. Welles incorporates multilingualism by voicing the foreign languages himself in the “Brazil” program, where he retains a sense of plurivocality through a mechanism of “call-and-response” (with Carmen Miranda, as she “teaches” him about samba), and in the “Andes” program converses with ordinary U.S. citizens (the projected listeners), ranging from a truck driver, to a housewife, to a schoolgirl.²⁶ One might consider these radio versions as rehabilitations, rather than “prostheses,” of aspects of the projected text. Produced during World War II, they are still directed at serving the same overall policy agenda of strengthening the hemisphere against the Axis advance.

These recuperations can be contrasted with the multiple forms of self-quotation found in *The Lady from Shanghai*. Welles not only transposes the mirror sequence from “Love Story” but also, casting himself as an errant Irish sailor, borrows from an original narration by Jacaré in his diary to make the disturbing metaphoric connection between his employers, the Bannisters, and their partner, Grisby, and “sharks.” The manner in which Welles delivers this speech and the way in which it is shot (breaking the continuity of shot-reverse-shot in a shift of camera height) create a rupture in the diegesis, permitting the formation of a metaphoric association of the sharks with RKO executives, as well as with Jacaré's tragic disappearance. Although, admittedly, such associations would probably *not* be apparent to most viewers, to Brazilians, as viewing experience has demonstrated, they most definitely *are*. Jacaré's original utterance reads: “Near São Salvador [in Bahia], we saw

five or six ‘painted ones,’ [sharks] on top of the water, with their mouths open ready to swallow the first thing that showed up. We got rid of them and continued on our way.”²⁷

Welles, in a characteristic move toward hypertextuality, transposes the scene to Fortaleza, “off the hump of Brazil,” and places himself in Jacaré’s position aboard a ship, where he watches a school of sharks eat at each other until the sea is “red with blood” and “there wasn’t a single shark that survived.” Within the immediate diegesis, this statement is prophetic, of course, since this violent self-destruction of the “sharklike” characters is precisely how the plot of *The Lady from Shanghai* ends. Nevertheless, one cannot help but wonder whether it might also have been wishful—and vengeful—thinking on Welles/Michael’s part: that studio executives overly concerned with profit and residual fascists would simply “extinguish themselves” from the competition through the carrying out of their own agendas, so that artists such as himself would be free to pursue their creative imagination and social commitments.

This process of converting metonymic displacements into metaphoric associations is also at work, perhaps less visibly than in *The Lady from Shanghai*, in the mise-en-scène of *Touch of Evil*, where it is largely a function of framing and the choreography of elements within shots and scenes rather than of dialogue. For example, in the climactic sequence of the corrupt Sheriff Quinlan’s downfall and death, Mexican narcotics agent Mike Vargas (played by Charlton Heston, producing a character that is a hybridization of Brazilian, Mexican, and American signifiers) figures in the metadramatic role of matador, assisted by the crestfallen yet morally reformed Menzies as picador. They stalk Quinlan (played by a hefty Welles), who has already been marked as a “bull” in a low-angled shot in Tanya’s parlor, his torso framed by the large bull’s horns hanging as a trophy on the wall behind him. The *plaza de toros* in this scene is the United States–Mexico border, studded with the sounds and images of oil derricks.

Finally, direct references to *It’s All True* appear once again in the Orson Welles’ *Sketchbook* television series from the midfifties, in which Welles, appearing as narrator/storyteller, delivers disseminated versions of both the production event and the story content of *It’s All True*, while making sketches of featured people and places in an improvisational fashion. Here, one can see how Welles, through the essay format, not only reinstates his role as the mediator between cultures but more generally attempts to recuperate what tends to be lost in the process of cinematic suturing: his inscription of himself as the author of the projected text of *It’s All True*, which unambiguously appears as the ultimate referent of these stories, even if it appears only in hypertextual and slightly disarticulated form. For example, the “curse” placed on the “Carnaval” script is recounted in a program devoted to fate-

ful mishaps occurring during “first night” performances, whereas “My Friend Bonito” is recounted, this time transposed to Spain, as a separate program.²⁸

In the absence of the possibility of a collective exercise of recuperation and remembrance, Welles enters the ring as the sole author in an effort to salvage—as well as embody—the lost text. Yet this is precisely the point at which the element of prosthesis becomes most visible: due to the real of the apparently irretrievable film and potential audience for the film at this juncture, an equivocal relationship is established not only between signifier and *It's All True* as referent but between Welles as storyteller and the true substance and meaning for him of his stories. Selecting aspects of *It's All True* for presentation thirteen years after its production, Welles appears to be able to cope with its loss only through disavowal; in doing so, however, he merely underscores its personal and cultural significance, which remains as an enigma to be deciphered at the margins of the new text. In other words, this disavowal, uttered in his essay projects and in later conversations with biographers and collaborators, such as Barbara Leaming, Peter Bogdanovich, and Gary Graver, should be interpreted as what Mikhail Bakhtin called a “loop-hole,” or “the retention for oneself of the possibility of altering the ultimate, final meaning of one’s own words.”²⁹

DISSEMINATIONS: BRAZILIAN CINEMALCHEMY FROM LUIZ DE BARROS TO ROGÉRIO SGANZERLA

As the Viany-Manzon newspaper feud appearing as late as 1945 attests, the suspension and its aftermath did not fall on deaf ears in Brazil, especially in the film community, where Orson Welles was effectively “sainted.” The admiration shown by both contemporary and later generations of filmmakers has gone beyond claims of filiation, expressed by filmmakers as different as Glauber Rocha and Luiz Rosenberg Filho, to disseminations of *It's All True* in various film works. These disseminations have been carried out in quite separate fashion by both Brazilian commercial and avant-garde filmmakers, working in quite different eras, to retrieve what from the Brazilian standpoint had been lost by the film’s suspension and sequestering by RKO; indeed, the later works are undergirded by nostalgia, or *saudade*. Here, it is interesting to note that Welles has held an equal appeal both for directors and producers of *chanchadas* and for those linked to Cinema Novo, who, at least initially, rejected the industrial model for which the *chanchadas* stood. That is, his power to inspire has spanned two apparently opposing currents in Brazilian film history. These disseminations began with the reemployment of musical performers, especially Herivelto Martins and the Trio de Ouro, Grande Othelo, and Emilinha Borba; songs (namely, the “Praça Onze” trilogy); and even the linkage of samba to the Allied cause in *Samba em Berlim* (1943) and *Berlim na Batucada* (1944), both directed by Luis de Barros and

produced and released by Cinédia Studio.³⁰ They were followed in the fifties by Carlos Manga, a director much admired by the late Grande Othelo—he featured Othelo in many of his films. Manga rendered homage to Welles by quoting the latter’s graphic editing matches in *Matar ou correr* (*To Run or to Die*, a parody of Zinnemann’s *High Noon*), *De vento em poupa* (*With Wind in the Sails*), and *Esse milhão é meu* (*This Million Is Mine*), and by suddenly altering his approach to shooting *O homem do Sputnik* (*The Man from the Sputnik*) after seeing *Citizen Kane* for the first time in 1958.³¹

The most direct and undiluted dissemination of *It’s All True*, however, can be found in the films and writings of the late Rogério Sganzerla. A member of the 1960s “underground” film movement, he was a veritable crusader for the vindication of Welles’s accomplishments in Brazil in response to the auteur’s disparagement by Euro-American critics and punishment by RKO.³² In the late seventies, Sganzerla began to research the traces of the film’s production in Brazil and located a number of contributors to the “Carnaval” episode, notably Herivelto Martins and Grande Othelo, as well as Edmar Morel, who wrote the treatment to “Jangadeiros.”³³ The result of these forays was the widely distributed *Nem Tudo É Verdade*, followed by *A Linguagem de Orson Welles* (*The Language of Orson Welles*, 1990), *Tudo É Brasil* (*All Is Brazil*, 1998), and *O Signo do Caos* (*The Sign of Chaos*, 2003). The punning in the title of *Nem Tudo É Verdade* actually serves as a literal reference to its consisting, like *It’s All True*, of both “documentary” and staged scenes, as well as footage (printed from the Paramount Footage Library collection) of “Carnaval” and the *jangadeiros*’ triumphant entry into Guanabara Bay. The documentary scenes are mainly interviews with Herivelto and Grande Othelo, while the staged scenes are vignettes shot at the Rio de Janeiro locations frequented by Welles, featuring the *paulista* rock personality Arrigo Bernabé in the role of Welles and Helena Ignez as Shifra Haran. These scenes appear to employ quotations from statements by Welles to the press; their purpose is to evoke Welles’s intentions and vision of the project, as well as the difficulties he encountered dealing not only with RKO but also with the Brazilian authorities while shooting on location (see fig. 38).

A Linguagem de Orson Welles is a short and extremely effective experiment in Eisensteinian-inspired montage, establishing contrapuntal relations between sound and image, and using only archival materials, presented with occasional voice-over commentaries by Grande Othelo: from Welles’s radio programs (*Hello Americans*, *Heart of Darkness*, *The Shadow*) to clips from the Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda (DIP) newsreel series, “Cinejornal Brasileiro,” chronicling Welles’s visit to Rio de Janeiro, as well as those of Walt Disney, Nelson Rockefeller, and Sumner Welles. In one particularly evocative sequence, shots of Rockefeller arriving in Rio are edited together with Welles’s ominous tones in the well-known radio phrase “Only the Shadow knows.” In contrast to *Nem Tudo É Verdade*, this compilation film places



Figure 38. Frame enlargement: Helena Ignez and Arrigo Bernabé in a staged scene from Rogério Sganzerla's *Nem Tudo É Verdade*, 1986. Courtesy Rogério Sganzerla.

It's All True squarely within the context of U.S.-Brazilian diplomatic relations and, in so doing, proffers hypotheses as to who and what might have been responsible for the film's suspension.

Tudo É Brasil is an effort to reconstruct in kaleidoscopic form the Brazil that Welles might have encountered in the early forties, from the modern coastal boulevards and majestic landmarks of Rio de Janeiro, to popular samba culture (it includes clips of Carmen Miranda performing "O Quê que a Bahiana Tem?" in a late thirties chanchada), to the vestiges of colonialism and slavery, represented in a series of maps and etchings. Stylistically, it departs from the black-and-white aesthetic of archival materials in *A Linguagem*, to emphasize bright color found in documentary footage and tinted gravures and etchings, animated through the copious use of tabletop cinematography, as if to counter in realist form Disney's Technicolor syndecdochic animation of Zé Carioca, part *malandro*/part gentleman, and Rio as the Brazilian nation. Thus the film completes a gradual move, from *Nem Tudo* through *A Linguagem*, toward conjuring forth the past through fixed, archival, rather than moving, live-action images that can be studied on a synchronic as well as diachronic axis. The mostly asynchronous sound track (aside from the chanchada footage) is composed of recorded interviews with Richard Wil-

son and Bill Krohn, as well as quotations from Welles's radio shows, especially the *Hello Americans* "Brazil" program, which casts a retrospective glance on Welles's multidimensional encounter with Brazilian history, culture, and geoeconomy. Importantly, Sganzerla refuses to let this syncopated "montage of attractions" turn into an apocalyptic moment, even as he struggles to preserve the memory of *It's All True* in spite of its suspension and suppression.

Sganzerla's formula of deconstructive reconstruction finds its culmination in the feature-length *O Signo do Caos*, which contrasts sharply with the techniques, if not altogether the aesthetics and poetics, of the previous films. It makes a return to the black-and-white aesthetics of *A Linguagem de Orson Welles*, yet in contradistinction to the previous films, it relies almost entirely on live action to dramatically reconstruct the censorious treatment of Welles and *It's All True* by members of the Vargas government and the local power elite shortly before Welles's departure from Brazil. The result is a melancholic portrayal of what once was an exuberant, lush Rio de Janeiro, as captured in Welles's Technicolor footage, implicitly contrasted with Sganzerla's decrepit and taciturn characters who spread rumors through the crypts of bureaucracy, secretly slip the footage out of its warehouse, then toss it, reel upon reel, off the cliffs overlooking Guanabara Bay. In this fictionalized version of production events, the film's history is transformed into a political thriller (a genre enjoyed by both Welles and Sganzerla) in which Welles is the absent "fall guy," vintage footage of Rio is substituted for the original footage pertaining to *It's All True*, and the evidence of bureaucratic misdeeds and false accusations is recorded and rudely reiterated by a noisy parrot, in much the same way that a lonely Amazonian parrot is left to tell the story of the antihero Macunaíma in Mario de Andrade's eponymous modernist novel of the twenties.³⁴

The villain of the plot is Dr. Amnesium, an official of the DIP (Dr. Alfredo Pessoa? Lourival Fontes?), who incessantly seeks not only to discredit Welles's reputation in Brazil but to ensure that all traces of the film are buried and forgotten. Even as it formally deconstructs any linear, transparent, and continuous narration of the past, *O Signo* is haunted by an obsession with memory and the "documentation" of the scenes of the crime as a type of habeas corpus. Rather than treat the audience to glimpses of, and analogies to, the unfinished film in the form of contemporary newsreels, surviving footage, and radio narration, Sganzerla forces us to recognize its suppression by including projections of vintage footage of Rio in its place (ordered by Dr. Amnesium for the purpose of censorship)—filmed at an oblique angle—and its metonymic expression in a series of film cans and negative that are cast off the cliffs overlooking Guanabara Bay. By positing Welles as an ally of popular Brazil (especially through the parallelism with Macunaíma, the multi-ethnic, transregional "hero without a character"), and the DIP as the destroyer of Brazilian local memory in the name of state-sanctioned history,

Sganzerla is able to extend the vectors of allegory from the 1942 film event to the erasure of national history by authoritarian powers at other, pivotal moments in Brazil's trajectory.

Other film projects by Welles are referenced in this quartet, such as *Touch of Evil* and *The Way to Santiago*, as if to restore the parity of *It's All True* within his better-known repertoire as auteur. Sganzerla's films all seem founded on Eisenstein and Welles's shared concept of creativity through mimesis (allowing for occasional irony, without resorting to full parody), and thus align themselves much more with Welles's own efforts at retrieving and invoking the projected text than with those of RKO. They also exhibit a Benjaminian tendency to build up the "larger structures" of the film from the smallest fragments, while underscoring the remaining discontinuities that hold the clues to the historical process, as well as the censored artistic imagination, thereby resisting the temptation to cinematically render an illusion of the "whole."

ORSON WELLES AND LATIN AMERICAN FILM CULTURE

Even though only fragments survived of Que Viva Mexico!, [Sergei] Eisenstein exerted a profound influence on the best of Mexican cinema until a decade ago. Thanks to Orson Welles, 1942 could be the date of cinematic discovery in Brazil.

PAULO EMILIO SALLES GOMES, "A aventura brasileira"

Several studies have traced the influence of Soviet director Sergei Eisenstein on visual style in Mexican narrative cinema of the thirties and forties—especially concerning composition within the frame, not to mention the rapprochement between Mexican mural art and cinema that has been credited to Eisenstein's evident inspiration by the muralists in *¡Que Viva México!* and his contact with them and the "30–30" group in the early thirties.³⁵ Others have focused on the synergistic relation between Spanish filmmaker Luis Buñuel's surrealism and Mexican melodrama in the fifties and the inspiration Buñuel has provided Mexican cineastes even in subsequent decades. Yet hardly any reckoning has been made of the effects of Orson Welles's forays into Mexican landscape and society on Mexican Golden Age cinema, which burgeoned immediately on the heels of "My Friend Bonito," even though location director Norman Foster went on to make what at least one Mexican film critic considers to be among the most distinctive bullfighting melodramas of the forties: Foster's own *Santa* (1943), starring Ricardo Montalbán and Esther Fernández, and *La Hora de la Verdad*.³⁶ Traces of Wellesian shot composition and style have also been noted by film historian Carl J. Mora in Alejandro Galindo's *Tribunal de justicia* (*Tribunal of Justice*) and in Foster's *La fuga* (*The Escape*), also dating from the early forties.

Of equal interest, however, are discursive linkages between *It's All True* and

other emergent tendencies in the postwar period, suggestive of a broader, regional “cinematic unconscious” rather than connections based on empirical contact and exchange during production. In retrospect, and as I suggested in chapter 5, several of the aspects of *It's All True* that caused it to deviate from its contemporary inter-American intertext brought it closer to both Italian neorealism and the early films of the New Latin American cinema, especially the Brazilian Cinema Novo movement, namely (1) the foregrounding of *individual* subjectivities, such as Louis Armstrong, Grande Othello, Manoel “Jacaré” Olímpio Meira, Jesús Vásquez (Chico), and potentially Atawallpa Inka, which, by U.S. and Mexican, Brazilian, and postcolonial Peruvian standards could be considered “subaltern”; (2) the shooting of both staged and documentary scenes on location, with an eye to exploring the intrinsic social and cultural interest of actual settings; (3) the decision to work in all three episodes with nonprofessional actors; they learn to perform as the film is being shot and thus incorporate aspects of their everyday selves into their performances, leading to spontaneous pro-filmic occurrences such as the outbreak of the Praça Onze fight on the set of “Carnaval”; (4) the use of available light (in both “Bonito” and “Jangadeiros”) and rudimentary camera equipment (in “Jangadeiros”), which contribute both to the verisimilitude of the film image in relation to physical reality and to the artisanal quality of filmmaking; (5) the exploration of alternative modes of narration (these range from [a] the cinematic equivalent of the “free indirect style,” whereby the spectator has access but is not *restricted* to the character’s subjective response to events in the narrative, through what can be termed a “cinematography of proximity” to the pro-filmic subjects combined with the perceptual focalization of those events through characters’ point-of-view shots to [b] the “call-and-response” structurings of lyrics and performances in “Carnaval,” [c] direct testimony of actor-participants [originally planned for “Jangadeiros” and “The Story of Jazz”], and [d] heterodiegetic approaches to narration, including Welles’s own presence as extradiegetic narrator); (6) and, finally, the choice of vernacular forms of cultural expression over more assimilated, stylized, and mass forms, which brings the project closer both to the sociolinguistic politics of the realist novels and to the concern with artisanal modes of production characteristic of Cinema Novo. These same characteristics are manifested in two documentary experiments in Mexico, overlooked in histories of Mexican cinema due to the omnipresence of the commercial Golden Age studio films:³⁷ Benito Alazraki’s composite portrayal of Mexican ethnicity, with attention to the indigenous population, *Raíces* (*Roots*, 1953), and documentarian Carlos Velo’s intimate portrait of bullfighting from the bullfighter’s perspective, *Torero* (1956), starring Mexican matorador Luis Procuna.

Beyond these general concerns and strategies, there are strong thematic and structural resemblances between *It's All True* and dos Santos’s *Rio 40*

Graus. Like Welles's "Carnaval," *Rio 40 Graus* uses a city symphony approach, combining documentary with staged scenes so as to portray Rio de Janeiro as a fundamentally hybrid city, where diverse social classes and racial groupings intersect and compete for the use of public space. Moreover, dos Santos aims to reveal hidden corners of the city through the perceptual and psychological focalization of favela dwellers. In dos Santos's next film, *Rio, Zona Norte*, there are strong parallels between the trajectory of samba composer protagonist Espirito (played by Grande Othelo) from the improvised *batuques* (jamming sessions) in the working-class district to rehearsed performances at a radio station in the city center, and the trajectory of Louis Armstrong in "The Story of Jazz" from the Storyville slums in New Orleans to the Savoy Ballroom in New York. The commentary in *Rio, Zona Norte* on the appropriation of African-based music by "white" musicians and entrepreneurs is especially notable. Like "Jangadeiros," Glauber Rocha's *Barravento* depicts the hardships faced by poor northeastern fishermen who do not own their means of production and who in addition to confronting the challenges of nature must choose between the relative safety of community life and the risks of seeking social change. (*Barravento* was also shot near Buraquinho, in Bahia, in the same area as Itapoã, where Welles shot scenes for "Jangadeiros.") Finally, Anselmo Duarte's *Pagador de Promessas*, like "My Friend Bonito" and "Carnaval," explores the issue of Catholic tolerance for, and conviviality with, folk religions strongly influenced by indigenous and African beliefs, arguing in its denouement that the strength of the national society rests on its capacity to develop syncretistic solutions to such conflicts.

As Grande Othelo poignantly indicated in an interview, many of the issues in representation confronted by Welles in 1942, especially the depiction of racial identity, were never fully addressed or resolved in Brazilian cinema, despite all the permutations in the postwar period.³⁸ Both of Pereira dos Santos's attempts to incorporate Afro-Brazilian protagonists in the fifties, *Rio 40 Graus* and *Rio Zona Norte*, end in tragedy for those characters, due either to their co-optation and exploitation by the "system" or to sudden, violent death, or both. Prior to the tropicalist period of Cinema Novo, only *Barravento* seems to end on an affirmative note for the hardworking members of the Afro-Brazilian community.

Even more challenging are the risks attached to interrogating Brazil's racial democracy and exposing the deeply rooted contradictions of social interaction along lines of class, gender, and sexuality in dynamic relation to race. Karim Ainouz's *Madame Satã* (2002) is based on the life and career of a famous transvestite performer and fighter in Rio, João Rodrigues (who chose his stage name after viewing Cecil B. DeMille's *Madam Satan*, 1930). It constitutes a first attempt to give an uncompromisingly visceral depiction of Brazil's racial and sexual "double standard" while portraying a relatively "happy ending," owing to the black protagonist's will to overcome the stig-

mas attached to his racial phenotype and sexuality. Like “Carnaval,” the film transgresses the boundaries marking geosocial territory in the city of Rio de Janeiro to test the limits of racial and social tolerance during the Vargas era. Despite his abjection and physical repression (thrown out of the better night-clubs and brutalized in jail), the film’s protagonist, alternately tough *malandro* and plumed lady, wins the “best costume” award in the 1942 Carnival celebration (where the real Rodrigues was captured on camera by Welles’s black-and-white crew). At last, we and s/he are able to move out of the inner reaches of the lower-working-class Lapa neighborhood and onto the glittering stage of a Carnival ball.

Conclusion

It's All True, Orson Welles, and Hemispheric History

Since I began this project, ongoing efforts to preserve and screen portions of *It's All True* have been accompanied by a series of public discussions, most recently at the Locarno International Film Festival, where two newly preserved reels (from “My Friend Bonito” and “Jangadeiros”) were exhibited in August 2005, all of which have helped greatly to bring the film into the fold of Welles’s studied work as an author. In this book, I have attempted to make use of these unveilings, together with a broad range of evidence culled from across the hemisphere, to retrieve, reframe, and re-present the history and textual contours of *It's All True*, as they took shape in the early forties, and as they appear to us today. This history, I have argued, is deeply embedded in the tightening of inter-American relations during World War II and the comparatively glacial movement of Hollywood’s attempt to incorporate and embrace Latinoamerican experiences and perspectives in something other than a dominant/subaltern mode. Scanning the chapters, I see a number of artistic and cultural contributions come into relief, as well as historical clarifications made possible by the film as event and text.

First, far from constituting an anomaly in Welles’s half century of filmmaking, *It's All True* left indelible marks on his later work—and not simply because it is quoted in subsequent films, where it surfaces as a “trope” within a commentary on U.S. neocolonialism (*The Lady from Shanghai* and *Touch of Evil*) and the transition to modernity at the edge of the European world (*Macbeth*, *Othello*, and perhaps *F for Fake*). The project, in a different manner than *Citizen Kane*, planted the seeds of the aesthetic and rhetorical possibilities to Welles afforded by documentary, which took the form not only of his celebrated “essay films,” of which *It's All True* can be considered the first, but also quite literally of the inscription of documentary footage and techniques, from *The Stranger*, which Peter Bogdanovich has claimed was the first U.S. com-

mercial feature to include actual footage of the Nazi concentration camps,¹ through *Lady from Shanghai*, *Othello*, *Don Quijote*, and *Chimes at Midnight* (to name the more notable fictional films) to *F For Fake*, *Filming "Othello,"* and *The Other Side of the Wind*. In this endeavor, Welles's debt to cinematographers Gregg Toland, Floyd Crosby, George Fanto (who also shot portions of *Othello*), Anchisi Brizzi (who previously worked for Italian neorealist director Vittorio De Sica), Rudolph Maté (uncredited on *Lady from Shanghai*), Edmond Richard (in *Chimes at Midnight*, who also shot *The Trial* and was instrumental in developing the Debie handheld 16mm camera), Gary Graver (*F for Fake*, *Filming "Othello,"* *The Other Side of the Wind*), and Michael Ferris (*The Other Side of the Wind*, who, along with Graver, also worked for John Cassavetes) needs to be acknowledged. In a less manifest but equally crucial manner, *It's All True* allowed Welles to experiment with location shooting (making maximal use of local detail) and a collaborative, international approach to filmmaking that would become his *modus operandi* following his departure for Europe in 1947, bringing him closer to non-U.S. film authors in the postindustrial era (what Hamid Naficy has called "accented cinema"),² beginning with the exponents of Brazilian Cinema Novo.

Thus in various ways, and even without the benefit of narrative closure and fixation of spatiotemporal parameters accorded an edited work, *It's All True* tested the limits of Welles's historical possibility of expression as an American director on American soil. As I have tried to show, this has less to do with the *auteur terrible* characterization of Welles's conduct vis-à-vis a film studio that had suffered shortfalls in revenue in the thirties and was in the process of being restructured than it does with Welles's interpretations of, and designs for, inter-American relations taking the form of a semidocumentary during a period of global geopolitical and economic change, accompanied by a tightening of state scrutiny of the international flow of screen images. *It's All True* emerged during a period of intense transformation of the U.S. nation-state that included, in addition to an escalation of the war, a unique collaborative—yet not always consonant—relationship between the U.S. government and the film industry regarding the design and distribution of Hollywood product under a new politics of cultural and economic solidarity with a foreign market; the phasing out of socially progressive documentary in favor of a message of democratic unity in the face of Axis aggression; the emergence of public protest and the first steps in civil rights legislation to protect ethnic minorities against discrimination; the formation of global circuits of cultural transmission through the use of mass media, especially radio; and the development of protectionist measures to stimulate and protect the growth of Latin American industrial cinema.

With regard to the relative weight of the state as compared with the studio system in shaping inter-American representation, it is clear that the state may have weighed more heavily both "on the ground" and "into the air" once

films were ready for distribution; yet the studios continued to wield a kind of veto power, which, as the case of *It's All True* illustrates, was still strongly connected to a socially conservative domestic distribution policy during the war. Moreover, notwithstanding the efforts of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) to increase the level of cultural authenticity and sensitivity in Hollywood film, to help that same industry in its export efforts, the simultaneous appeal of the suspended *It's All True* to pan-Americanism, Afro-diasporic consciousness, indigenous memory and survival, and the criollo ideal of pan-Latinidad brings into relief the economic limits of cultural reciprocity (Latin America remained primarily a market to be sold to rather than the site of film industries to be developed), along with the cultural and political stakes attached to racial and working-class representation in films that traveled during World War II. It is especially important to consider how the rules of the game pertaining to national cinematic representation affected the terms of transnational representation during this period. Ultimately, the rack focus of the film's theoretical and historiographical lens across the domestic/hemispheric fault line prompts a shift in emphasis away from the binary divisions of wartime politics (isolationist vs. patriot, Allied vs. Axis) and toward the thornier yet equally crucial problems posed by the intersection of partisan and class politics with the quest for racial equality and international solidarity.

Although an element of politically mindful self-censorship (what I prefer to call "diplomatic gestures") can be detected within the endotext of *It's All True*, especially where direct references to Mexican and Brazilian state power are involved, there is little doubt that in material as well as discursive ways the film entailed a collaborative, cross-cultural effort to make the term *American* more inclusive, while identifying sites and circuits where sociocultural differences could be exposed and understood and bases for dialogue explored. Within the endotext, the hemisphere was converted into a near-borderless space where subaltern identities and forms of cultural expression—suppressed by colonialism, neocolonialism, and incipient processes of modernization—could be affirmed and shared without necessarily passing through official channels of communication. In the process, Pan-Americanism comes to be redefined as a multilateral rather than bilateral enterprise, in which Mexicans, Peruvians, and Brazilians might have as much to learn from each other as they had to "show" curious, war-weary North Americans. Modern progress and participatory democracy are figured in the film as delicate processes that, to be successful, need to take their cues from independent initiatives originating at the "grass roots" as well as the state level of power. In its narrative discourse and its stylistic makeup, *It's All True* is a doubly fissured text: one that, in interpreting to the letter the code of cultural equivalency and reciprocity, along with multitiered popular education promoted by the OCIAA, invoked the style and rhetoric of documentary precursors;

yet in doing so, also introduced a poetics that caused it to drift from the scrimmage line between modern and artisanal forms in the hinterland, affecting its degree of “authenticity” as noted in chapter 5. Welles’s unusual combination of social progressivism and cultural conservatism—thereby inverting the terms guiding state and industry cultural policy in Mexico and Brazil, as well as the United States—took both the project and Welles, as author, out of synchronization with the dominant and diplomatically legitimate forms of public discourse on the Americas during World War II. It also removed the film’s inter-American discourse from the hardening parameters—then working to the detriment of differentiation and progressive change at the grassroots level—of the nation-state. The trade-off between respect for national sovereignty (at a premium during the Good Neighbor Policy) and the search for more pluralistic, multicultural forms of expression on film (in defiance of the international-domestic split) can be seen as catching on the emerging “rind” between endotext and exotext that was beginning to demarcate the film’s spatiotemporal—and hence its historico-cultural—parameters and ideological thrust, with consequences for its ontological and discursive future.

Whether *It’s All True* could have been produced at another studio, such as Twentieth Century-Fox, or at a different juncture in inter-American relations (earlier in 1941, for example, when the improvement of Brazilian-American relations was at a premium, and Walt Disney successfully researched and shot *Saludos Amigos*), or at a later point in film history, when 16mm technology became widely available and acceptable as a professional production format, will never be known. Larger organizational shifts within RKO and the discursive revamping of documentary film to serve immediate national security and anti-Axis objectives also cast doubt on whether Welles would have been able to salvage the film had he heeded the warnings of Lynn Shores, Phil Reisman, George Schaefer, and the Brazilian integralist camp by revamping it in a manner that suited both studio protocols and the conservative drift of national political winds. I have tried to show how no single cause can be found for the suspension and abandonment of the film; perhaps Welles could have overcome one or two of the sources of difficulty, yet to compromise the integrity of what had been shot and how it had been shaped would not have been commensurate with his nature.

Finally, one should not overlook the susceptibility of the cinema to intensive institutional supervision and long-term censorship as compared with radio and photography in the realm of inter-American representation. In the more ephemeral medium of radio, Welles was able to propose new terms for inter-American dialogue without risking censorship owing to the display of “racial mixing.” At the time, one’s gender also affected one’s visibility, and hence vulnerability to censorship. After commiserating with the extroverted and hypermediated Orson Welles, who was working with the most influen-

tial medium then perceived as a mirror of the prowess and weaknesses of the modern nation-state, one cannot help but marvel at his colleague Genevieve Naylor, who, as an unobtrusive woman still photographer, unburdened by an overtaxed technical crew, arduous long-distance negotiations with film studios, and safely outside the limelight of the anti-Axis, pro-Hollywood media blitz, was able to inconspicuously pursue her documentation of Brazil's hinterland and urban masses at work and at leisure, and retain the fruits of her expedition, which reached the coveted walls of Rockefeller's Museum of Modern Art before war's end. Whether one wishes to interpret Welles's uncompromising stance regarding the scale, methods, and sociocultural preoccupations of *It's All True* as courageous and honorable or intransigent and self-defeating, for its inter-American message, its strategies promoting transculturation, and its simultaneous exposure and smoothing of social inequities by the light of modern nationhood, *It's All True* remains a project very much "of" and beyond of its own space-time.

THE JANGADA AS CINEMATOGRAPH

People say that the one who discovered Brazil was Dom Pedro [king of Portugal]. But it wasn't. . . . On the 23rd of February Colombo de Souza [a fisherman] left Portugal. He was going straight to India, but the wind was against him, so they ended up sailing along the coast. . . . When it was Easter Sunday, he arrived here, in Brazil. So what happened to Colombo de Souza? He died, poor man, on the transom with nothing. All of them the same. Dom Pedro was the one who won because he was king.
José de Lima³

In chapter 2, I referred to the ways in which, as a visual symbol, the *jangada* aided the inscription of "deep history" in *It's All True*, a signal to the spectator that the foundations of the courageous act they had just witnessed reached well beyond a fishing accident or the presidential signing of *jangadeiros'* entitlement to benefits into national legislation. To the fishing colonies in Fortaleza, Welles's film was instrumental less as a means of providing an altered representation of lived reality than in furnishing the historical possibility of extending the geosocial horizon, so that the *jangadeiros* could continue to represent themselves to the world and enter into dialogue with other communities. As the montage of news reports in Tatá's scrapbook eloquently illustrated, the *raid* of 1941 led first to a conference with the president of Brazil, then to an encounter with the cameras of an RKO film crew that had traveled thousands of miles to take a record of the voyage back to the United States, and from there to screens across the hemisphere. The history of the film in this community, then, appears not as a singular, pivotal event but as an integral part of a series of bold initiatives in which the *jangada* was virtually transformed into a "cinematograph," projecting a self-fashioned image

of *jangadeiro* leaders into the outer geosocial sphere and bringing home impressions of the metropolis, Rio de Janeiro, then the seat of national power, along with the accoutrements brought by modernization (including Coca-Cola). A similar dynamic was found to be at work in the bull-raising community in central Mexico, with the vaquero linking homestead and open range, and the matador acting as conduit between rural hacienda and public urban spectacle, both with slightly conflicting investments in the bull's body and character.

The story of how Jacaré and his colleagues obtained a successful audience with an authoritarian ruler such as Getúlio Vargas in 1941 was indeed worthy of telling: The voyage and arrival were recorded not only by the Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda, the national press, and reenacted by Welles, but by members of the *jangadeiro* community who collected the news clippings to form their own historical montages of Welles's project in relation to the original event. At the time, the Iracema and Mucuripe fishing communities perceived the *raid* as one can only perceive the fissured and fractured yet surviving text of *It's All True*: as an effort that has to be renewed to remain historically effective. In the course of conducting oral history, I discovered that the story of *It's All True* was inseparable from the story of how, in 1951, five *jangadeiros* (Jerônimo de Souza, Manuel Preto "Pereira" da Silva, Raimundo "Tatá" Correia Lima, Manuel Frade, and João "Barrão" Batista) set sail on a *jangada* for Porto Alegre in the southern reaches of Brazil, sparking a cultural exchange with the local cattle workers. In April 1959, four *jangadeiros*, including Jerônimo André de Souza, Luiz Carlos "Garoupa" de Souza, José de Lima, and Samuel Egidio de Souza, arrived in Buenos Aires after undertaking a strenuous five-month-long voyage to establish diplomatic ties with the Frondizi government.

In the early sixties, Jerônimo was discouraged by Fernando Pinto from making another *raid*, this time to Cuba at the invitation of Fidel Castro, although Tatá was reportedly at work on a new *jangada* that would take him and the others through the Panama Canal to Los Angeles to visit Orson Welles. Then, in late April 1993, subsequent to the shooting of documentary footage for a reconstructed version of *It's All True*, four young *jangadeiros*, Edilson Fonseca, Francisco Ferreira, Mamede Dantas, and Francisco Valente, set sail from Prainha do Canto Verde, near Fortaleza, on a *jangada* named *S.O.S. Sobrevivência*.⁴ They took their protests of the ravaging of their fishing area and residential community by industrial fishing and real estate interests down the Brazilian coast to Rio de Janeiro, in an effort to preserve a way of life that is currently on the brink of extinction. Orson Welles's apprehensions regarding the future of such artisanal practices in the wake of modernization have indeed been substantiated as *jangadeiros* have retreated from the coast and into other less fulfilling and even more unstable occupations. In spite of the many changes that have taken place within *jangada* culture—

the transition to more lightweight and compact wooden rafts, the advent of women *jangadeiros*—the commercial fishing industry, today flanked by coastal tourism, continues to pose a formidable challenge to the livelihood and well-being of those who choose artisanal fishing.⁵

In 1993, however, it was only with difficulty that the heirs of the *São Pedro* voyage were able to speak with local authorities, and a request for an audience with then Brazilian president Itamar Franco was roundly ignored.⁶ Recognition for the ethnic identity of Brazilian coastal and Mexican indigenous peoples, their universal enfranchisement in the enlightenment sense, continues to be impeded by the restrictive terms defining citizenship in the national and international spheres. It was with such enfranchisement in mind that Welles proposed a dialogical model of cultural exchange in *It's All True*. One is tempted to ask, in this context, what the nature and extent of the effectivity of the film might have been over the long run, had it been released in the early forties. One might also ask whether this *other* strand of reconstructive “historiography”—a collective and successive reenactment of historical experience, coupled with a montage of memorabilia—is any less valid, instructive, or transformative than the kind of historiography taken up in this and other accounts of Welles’s expedition. In any event, with so many generations of firsthand engagement in cultural survival, and so much footage waiting to be preserved, this book is not likely to be the last word on *It's All True*.

APPENDIX ONE

Pages from a Research Scrapbook

Jacaré's Family Remembers

On my first day searching for local survivors of *It's All True* in Fortaleza in August 1989, I wandered with photographer Marcos Bonisson up Tomás Lopes Street in the neighborhood of Iracema, where many *jangadeiros* had lived at the time of Welles's shoot. We passed by two men who were repairing small machine parts by the curb, one of whom looked younger and was sitting under the shade of a leafy tree. As I glanced at the younger-looking man who was most engrossed in this task, his face looked uncannily familiar to me. Taking a wild chance, I pulled out an eight-by-ten, black-and-white print of the *jangadeiro* Jacaré taken shortly before his death in May 1942 (see fig. 12, page 53) and asked him if he knew who was in the photograph, if he was at all related to Jacaré. Speechless, the man let his tools drop to the ground, and tears welled up in his eyes. Indeed, Jacaré was his father, and the man standing next to him was his brother, Raimundo. He immediately asked what it was we wanted. I said I would like to hear their story of what happened. Did they remember the film? Would they like to see more photographs? We were beckoned inside Raimundo's simple cement house, and what followed was an irrepressible cathartic moment for José "Guaiuba" Meira and his brother Raimundo "Puraquê," who had been orphaned decades earlier. Too choked up for words, they invited us to return another day. Before we left, Marcos took a photograph of the two brothers (see fig. 39).

On 19 August, forty-seven years after Jacaré's death and shortly after our fateful meeting with his sons, Marcos and I conducted a first formal interview at the same house in Fortaleza with the children of Manoel "Jacaré" Olímpio Meira: Joaquim Meira, José "Guaiuba," Maria "Baiana" Meira, Maria José Meira, Pedro Meira, Raimunda Olímpio Meira, and Raimundo "Pu-



Figure 39. Raimundo “Puraquê” and José “Guaiuba” Meira, sons of Jacaré, Fortaleza, Brazil, August 1989. Photograph by Marcos Bonisson. Copyright Catherine L. Benamou and Marcos Bonisson.

raqué.”¹ Like “Jacaré,” whose nickname means “alligator” (reportedly because of his wrinkled appearance at birth), at least two of his sons bear the nicknames of aquatic creatures, *puraquê* and *guaiuba*, local varieties of fish. Maria “Baiana” is Jacaré’s eldest daughter; she was twelve at the time of the film shoot. At age fourteen, after her mother’s death, she headed the family of nine small children. Maria José is the youngest living daughter of Jacaré. Of all the siblings, she has shown the greatest concern with establishing the actual cause of Jacaré’s disappearance. In a later interview (4 December 1990), she claimed that Jacaré might have found it “convenient” to free himself of ten children and could easily have gone off to live “another life” somewhere else. (Unconfirmed rumors have circulated about a possible romance between Jacaré and a hospital nurse at the time of the Rio accident.) José “Guaiuba,” the man who was making repairs on the street, is Jacaré’s eldest son and the most outspoken member of the family. To this day, *none* of Jacaré’s

1. The interview with Jacaré’s children was recorded in Fortaleza, Ceará, on 19 August 1989, on videotape and audiotape.

children have accepted his death as a simple accident, given his great skill as a swimmer and the unusual circumstances in which the raft overturned in Guanabara Bay.

CB: Jacaré was one of the most important actors in “Jangadeiros,” because he represented the *jangadeiro* community to the president in Rio de Janeiro, and he met with Orson Welles there at the Copacabana Palace hotel. I have a newspaper article that shows Jacaré speaking to Welles. Apparently, they liked to tell each other jokes.

MARIA BAIANA: Jacaré liked to joke a lot. At home, we have a picture of him in Rio, where the reporter was asking him what his greatest difficulty had been during the voyage, and he said that the biggest difficulty that he had ever encountered in his life was that he had to speak into that microphone [general laughter]. He was a very funny man.

CB: [Distributing film stills] Here is another picture, where Jacaré is really elegant . . . living the “good life.”

MARIA JOSÉ: Can it be that he really died back then? . . .

CB: Can you explain what the Jangada Clube was?

JOSÉ “GUAIUBA”: The Jangada Clube was a place where they held banquets. Fernando Pinto would bring those artists—he even brought that singer who died in Rio de Janeiro . . . Orlando Silva! He would bring those fishermen, those *côco* musicians.² There was a singer with a guitar. . . . Pinto would make fandangos with the fishermen. . . . He would act as the “war captain” [of sports competitions] the fishermen playing against the firemen, the fishermen against the navy. All of his life, he was on the fisherman’s side. So we would have a lot of fun at those parties. He would throw parties often, and many people would go. I know that Fernando Pinto was always a good person, to the fishermen, mainly.³

MARCOS BONISSON: Mr. José, how do you explain Jacaré’s death? What do you think happened?

JG: Probably . . . they say it can’t have been a trap or anything like that—nobody is able to judge anyone else, right? But I think that there’s something wrong with how he died.

MBON: What do you think happened?

JG: It was a disaster. . . . Jacaré really knew how to swim, it was in a bay with many people, the way Barra da Tijuca is, right? I’ve seen it [on TV] . . . there are many people; so, if I were to film a scene there, there would be a big reaction among the people in that crowd. Because they say that there are many fish, and sharks, and so on, so there had to be a very strong barrier there to keep the fish from coming closer. . . . Or, they must have had something there to prevent accidents like that

2. The *côco* is an Afro-indigenous form of dance music, native to the coastal areas of Ceará. It is performed with a simple musical accompaniment using percussion instruments (including the clapping of hands), and songs are sung in “rounds.” The musicians stand in a loosely formed circle, allowing solo dancers to enter the ring and show off their talents. Traditionally enjoyed in *jangadeiro* communities, today the *côco* has nearly vanished, as younger generations have embraced more modern genres of music and dance.

3. Fernando Pinto appears to the right of Orson Welles in figure 25, page 144.

from happening, no? And when they [the other *jangadeiros*] came back here [to Fortaleza], they didn't even know what had happened. You would ask them, and Manuel Preto would tell you one thing; you would ask Tatá, he would say another; you would ask Jerônimo, and he would say other things. I never got the same answer. . . . There's no way we can tell, since they were *there* and didn't know what happened.

MBON: But what do you think happened, sir?

JG: Me? What do I think? In my opinion—which I've held all my life—it was planned. [Lengthy, tense silence] Only that.

MBON: Why do you think it was planned?

JG: Now, that's a little difficult to answer, isn't it? [Pause] That's all I'm going to say.

CB: Do the rest of you agree?

MAJO: I think that, since he was such an intelligent person, people kidnapped him and took him to another place. They took him away, that's what I think.

CB: And you, Dona Maria?

MABA: I also think so, because there were motorboats, they had everything, the *jangada* capsized. . . . How could daddy have disappeared and the others not? The four of them didn't disappear, did they? What about the other three? And that fish that swallowed him, only they never saw that fish! They didn't mention [the fish] until they were in the hospital. They asked one another, "Where's Jacaré?" and they thought he had died.

JG: No one could tell us what happened.

MABA: So then they say that there was a boat, and a very thick fog. I only know that he disappeared. . . .

CB: And how did Orson Welles handle the situation later? I've heard several versions. Some say he didn't do anything to help Jacaré's family, others say that, yes, there was some form of compensation.

MABA: I think that Mother received a kind of compensation. It was the only money we received until five years later, when my mother died. We were nine children without a father or a mother, just us. Lord knows what we went through. . . . At that time, 700 mil *réis*⁴ was [all] that we received to support ourselves. . . .

JG: To support a whole bunch of kids.

MABA: We only had our house. Only God knows what we went through. . . . The kids didn't go to school, because they couldn't, you see?

JG: There's one thing I have to say, if my father were alive, we wouldn't still be in this same situation.

MABA: We wouldn't have had to go through what we went through. . . .

MABA: We were forced to board these two [brothers Pedro and Raimundo] here. The situation was so horrible because we didn't even have a place to work. . . . You don't know how sorry we are now . . . for everything they had to go through in that juvenile home.

MAJO: There was a little one [Francisca] who died because we didn't have any food, because we didn't have medicine . . . so we became nine children [instead of ten]. . . .

4. As a result of the inflation caused by World War II, the total amount the family received would have fed ten children for only four months at most.

JG: Now, whoever kept the money must have had a good time. Whoever kept the money and kept receiving things: *that* person made out all right.

CB: Who might that have been?

JG: I am referring primarily to the fact that when Orson Welles sent that money, we were very young, and my mother didn't even understand money. So the person who kept the money was Fernando Pinto. . . . Someone sent the money to us, but there was someone who kept the money. . . .

MABA: The money stayed in the bank . . . then we received the interest from the money. So, with the money, a house was built, which is our house. . . . Pinto had them build it. Midyear, he would take out some money and buy us clothes, you see? And at the end of the year, we received the interest.

MAJO: But that was [only] while Mom was alive.

JG: I'd like to say something: in '42, one hundred *contos* of *réis* was a lot of money, not even rich people had one hundred *contos* of *réis*.⁵ So that money in a bank, in a savings account, must have yielded enough for food and education for all of us. . . . It was enough, wasn't it? So who kept that money?

MABA: You remember that three people. . . .

JG: It passed through the hands of Fernando Pinto, it passed through the hands of Maria Orlanda,⁶ Padre Pita, Dr. Romeu. . . .

MABA and MAJO: Padre Pita wouldn't have taken it.

JG: He didn't? But he was part of the church society . . . and so was Fernando Pinto.

MABA: Fernando Pinto was the last one to call on us.

JG: The rest of them ate up the money. We were the only people who weren't eating anything. . . .

CB: Did the community try to help you in any way?

MAJO: No . . .

MABA: They helped by giving us practically "nothing" . . .

JG: What we received a lot of were packages of small, hard biscuits this size [pinches fingers together] . . .

MABA: But that was during the voyage; after Jacaré died, we didn't even get that!

JG: We would get packages of those biscuits, which were so hard that when you would eat them, you'd have to stop: your teeth would be hurting! [General laughter]. . . . I'm laughing, but . . . thank God we are all alive, that we are healthy. Thank God we're not complaining . . . because it's over now. For me, for all of us, my father was a great father. Even today he is, because if he weren't, we wouldn't all be joined together here. . . .

5. One *conto de rei*, or 1,000\$000, equaled 1 million *réis*. In 1942, a new *jangada* cost 1,640\$000 (Edmar Morel, "A Historia da Jangada no Brasil," film treatment, "Jangadeiros" episode, March 1942, Edmar Morel Personal Archive, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). The money sent by Orson Welles was therefore enough to purchase sixty new *jangadas* or a spacious house in São Paulo, and it amounted to 142 times what Jacaré's children actually received. Given the highly inflationary Brazilian economy, the fixed "interest" the family received on Welles's contribution must have plummeted in its real market value.

6. Maria Orlanda was a Fortaleza socialite and benefactor of the *jangadeiro* community, by way of the local Catholic diocese.

APPENDIX TWO

Fact Sheets for Filmed Episodes of *It's All True*, 1941–1942

The following symbols and abbreviations are used: **Recorded for playback in Odeon studio sessions; *D*=recorded in synch at Cinédia Studios; *L*=recorded live; *T*= Technicolor negative used.

I. “MY FRIEND BONITO”

Production Company

Mercury Productions and RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.

Principal Credits and Crew

Director and producer: Orson Welles

Codirector (location): Norman Foster

Screenplay: John Fante and Norman Foster, based on a short story by Robert Flaherty

Director of cinematography: Floyd Crosby

Camera operators: Alfred Gilks and Alex Phillips Sr.

Line producer, interpreter, and contributing screenwriter: José Noriega¹

Associate producer: Jesús “Chucho” Solórzano

Assistant director: Unnamed, from Mexican Film Workers Union (UTECM)

Two grips from Mexico City

Two production assistants from Aguascalientes

Mexican government censor: Señor Ortiz

1. José Noriega did a preliminary continuity of bullfighting sequences for Orson Welles in 1944.

Cast

Jesús "Hamlet" Vásquez Plata as the young boy, "Chico"
 Domingo Soler as "Miguel," the *caporal*
 Carlos Villarías² as "Don Luis," the hacienda owner
 Jesús "Chucho" Solórzano as first matador, "La Punta" and all bullfighting sequences
 Silvério Pérez as second matador (*tientas* in Tlaxcala and bullfighting sequences)
 Fermín "Armillita" Espinosa as third matador in the ring
 Twelve "La Punta" bulls as "Bonito"

Featured Stars and Extras of Note

Conchita Cintrón as extra matador and *rejoneadora*
 "El Güero" Guadalupe, picador at "La Punta"
 Ramón Macías and Pedro Chávez as bullhands at "La Punta"

Additional Characters

Don Alfredo and Marguerita³

Shooting Locations

1. "La Punta" hacienda in Jalisco, near Aguascalientes ("Bull and Boy at Play"; "Tientas"). Owner: Paco Madrazo
2. Zacatepec ranch in Tlaxcala ("Blessing of the Animals"; "Cow Tientas"). Owner: Daniel Muñoz
3. Atenco Ranch, Mexico State. Owner: Manuel M. Barbabosa. November 1941
4. Maximino Avila Camacho's ranch (attempts to shoot "Birth of Bull")
5. Plaza El Toreo, Mexico City (bullfighting scenes)

Production Headquarters and Lodging

Hotel Francia, Aguascalientes; Hotel Ritz, Mexico City

Shooting Dates

25 September 1941 to 18 December 1941

2. There is no documentation pertaining to the casting of this role; however, a strong physical resemblance can be noted between the actor playing Don Luis in "My Friend Bonito" and Carlos Villarías, who was cast as Don Luis Martínez del Arco in the 1936 production of *¡Ora Ponciano!* The actor was professionally trained and of Mexican origin in any case.

3. These characters were added to the episode in the 1943 supplemental script of *It's All True* and therefore were never cast or filmed. Presumably "Don Alfredo" would have replaced the character of "Don Luis."

Footage

21 reels, or 16,793 feet, of nitrate positive and corresponding negative recorded in RKO vault, November 1952; 52 cans, or approximately 75,145 feet, located in UCLA Film and Television Archive nitrate vaults, June 2000, of which 8,000 feet have been preserved on safety positive, leaving approximately 67,145 feet still in need of preservation.

II. "CARNAVAL" (AKA "THE STORY OF SAMBA")

Production Company

Mercury Productions for RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., with the collaboration of Cinédia Studios, Inc., Rio de Janeiro

Principal Credits and Crew

Director, producer, and chief writer: Orson Welles
 Executive assistant/associate producer/second unit director: Richard Wilson
 Assistant director/choreographer/composer: Herivelto Martins
 Second assistant director: Luiz de Barros
 Screenwriter and second unit director: Robert Meltzer
 Technicolor cinematographer: William Howard Greene
 Cinematographer (black-and-white): Harry J. Wild
 Technicolor camera operator: Henry Imus
 Camera operator (black-and-white): Edwin Pyle
 Camera operator (black-and-white): Joseph Biroc
 Assistant cameraman: Willard Barth
 Technicolor technician: John M. Gustafson
 Technicolor technician: Sidney Zisper
 Sound recordist: John L. Cass
 Sound assistant and maintenance: William Turner
 Boom operator: Fred Rogers
 Still photographers: Ned Scott and Jean Manzon
 Color technician: G. S. Hannaford
 Color technician: Robert Brower
 Electrician: Walter Quast
 Electrician: Jimmie Almand
 Electrician: John W. Neff
 Electrician: Leland Armstrong
 Grip: James Curley

Administrative Staff

Secretary to Mr. Welles: Augusta Weissberger
 Secretary to Mr. Welles: Shifra Haran
 Secretary to Mr. Wilson: Elizabeth Amster (Wilson)
 Mercury public relations: Dante Orgolini

RKO public relations in Rio: Bruno Cheli
 Location production coordinator: Leo Reisler
 RKO production manager: Lynn Shores,
 Mercury publicity (in Hollywood): Herbert Drake
 RKO publicity: Tom Pettey

Total U.S. personnel in Brazil: 27

Brazilian Research Staff

Almirante
 Ayres de Andrade Junior
 Haroldo Barbosa
 Rui Costa
 Luiz Edmundo
 Aydano Couto Ferraz
 Ernani Fornari
 Clóvis de Gusmão
 Alex Viany

Portuguese Interpreter

Mathilde Kastrup

Brazilian and Mexican Star Performers

Grande Othelo (Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata) as a *malandro* and the “spirit of Carnival”
 Odete Amaral as herself **
 Linda Batista as herself **
 Emilinha Borba as herself **
 Chucho Martínez Gil as himself **
 Moraes Netto as himself **
 Pery Ribeiro as a “lost child”

Extras of Note

Abigail Mauricio Horta (“Carinhoso” sequence)
 Balduína de Souza (Grande Othelo’s mother-in-law, “Adeus Praça Onze” sequence and other crowd sequences)
 (As many as 229 Brazilian extras were used for Cinédia studio sessions.)

Featured Composers and Lyricists (partial listing)

Ataulpho Alves
 Mário Lago
 Herivelto Martins

Paul Misraki
 David Nasser
 Grande Othelo
 Nicolás Otero
 Vicente Paiva
 Russo do Pandeiro
 Pixinguinha
 Sá Róris
 Rubens Soares

Featured Songs/Compositions (most are carnival hits, 1942)

“Adeus, Praça Onze” (comp. Herivelto Martins and Grande Othelo) D
 “Ave Maria no Morro” (comp. Herivelto Martins) D
 “Batuque no Morro” D
 “Carinhoso” (comp. Pixinguinha) **
 “Carnaval” theme (comp. Paul Misraki)
 “Escravos de Jó”
 “Lamento Negro”
 “Lero-Lero”
 “Nega do Cabelo Duro” (comp. Rubens Soares and David Nasser)
 “Nós os Carecas” L
 “Nós os Cabeleiros” L
 “Panamérica e Folgo Nego” (comp. Nicolás Otero) **
 “Saudades da Amélia” (comp. Ataulpho Alves and Mario Lago) L
 “Se Alguém Disse”
 “Um a Zero” **

Musicians and Bands (partial listing)

Francisco Alves and Orchestra
 Os Anjos do Inferno
 Geraldo Caboré **
 Dédé and Group (*frevo*)
 Fon-Fon and Orchestra
 Gáo and Orchestra L
 Benedito Lacerda
 Luperce Miranda
 Os Namorados da Lua
 Russo do Pandeiro
 Pãs Douradas (*frevo*)
 Pereira Filho
 Luciano Perrione
 Pixinguinha
 Trio de Ouro
 Ray Ventura and Orchestra L **

Vocalists (in addition to those mentioned above)

Ataulpho Alves
 Jaime Brito
 Horacina Corrêa
 Carmen Costa
 Nelson Gonçalves
 Marilú
 Cyro Monteiro
 Dalva de Oliveira ("Adeus, Praça Onze")
 Eladyr Porto
 Quarteto de Bronze

Shooting Locations in Rio de Janeiro

Avenida Carioca; T Baía da Guanabara; T Cantagallo Favela; Cassino da Urca; T Cinelândia; Clube dos Democráticos; Clube dos Independentes; Corcovado; T Favela da Saúde; Humaitá Favela; Lapa (neighborhood and Arcos Aqueduct); T Quintino (neighborhood); T Praça Mauá; Praça Onze/Avenida Getúlio Vargas; Praia do Pinto Favela; Santa Teresa (neighborhood); T Teatro da Independência; T Teatro Municipal; T Teatro da República; T Yacht Club (Guanabara) in Rio de Janeiro; Petrópolis (close to Rio de Janeiro); and Ouro Preto (state of Minas Gerais); and the soundstages of Cinédia Studios, T in the São Cristóvão neighborhood of Rio de Janeiro

Production Headquarters and Lodging

Palace Hotel and Copacabana Palace Hotel, Rio de Janeiro

Shooting Dates

8 February 1942 to 8 June 1942

Footage

The November 1952 inventory at RKO records the existence of 7 reels of black-and-white positive footage (approximately 6,500 feet) printed from Technicolor negative; 1 reel, or 5,481 feet, of Technicolor positive; and 200,000 feet of Technicolor negative, along with 50,000 feet of music sound negative. This negative quite possibly includes the Rio Technicolor scenes from "Jangadeiros." A June 2000 inventory conducted at the UCLA Film and Television Archive reveals the survival of 26 cans, or approximately 35,530 feet, of black-and-white nitrate negative, of which 3,330 feet have been preserved and 32,200 feet remain unpreserved. Of the Technicolor footage, only about 5,481 feet remain (most probably this is the nitrate positive referred to in the 1952 inventory); of this color footage, approximately 2,750 feet safety color interpositives were processed for use in the 1993 documentary, leaving approximately 2,700 unpreserved in the vaults at Paramount Studios.

III. "JANGADEIROS" (AKA "FOUR MEN ON A RAFT")

Production Company

Mercury Productions for RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., with the collaboration of Cinédia Studios, Rio de Janeiro

Principal Credits and Crew

Directed and chief screenwriter: Orson Welles
 Associate producer: Richard Wilson
 Research and treatment writer: Edmar Morel
 Cinematographer (Fortaleza): George Fanto
 Cinematographer (Technicolor, Rio de Janeiro): William Howard Greene
 Assistant cameraman (Fortaleza): Orlando Santos
 Still photographers (Fortaleza): Chico Albuquerque and Roberto Cavaliere
 Still photographers (Rio de Janeiro): Ned Scott and Jean Manzon
 Secretary to Mr. Welles: Shifra Haran
 Assistant to Mr. Wilson: Elizabeth Amster (Wilson)

Cast

Manoel "Jacaré" Olímpio Meira as himself
 Jerônimo André de Souza as himself
 Raimundo "Tatá" Correia Lima as himself
 Manuel "Preto" Pereira da Silva as himself
 João "Jacaré" Olímpio Meira as Jacaré at sea
 Francisca Moreira da Silva as the young bride
 José Sobrinho as the young groom
 Manuel Frade as spokesperson at the meeting
 "Mãe" Maria as Sobrinho's grandmother
 Additional participation by members of the Z-1 and Z-2 fishing colonies at Iracema and Mucuri beaches, Fortaleza, Ceará

Shooting Locations

1. Fortaleza: Nossa Senhora das Graças ("faked" scenes of the *jangada* at sea); Iracema and Mucuri Beaches ("Building the Jangada"; departures and arrivals from fishing; "Division of the Catch"; "Lacemaking"; "Domestic Life"; "The Wedding"; "Bringing the News"; "The Departure"); Volta da Jurema ("Finding the Body"; "Carrying the Body out of the Water"; Proa Dune ("The Funeral"; "The Departure"); Serviluz (women washing clothes)
2. Coastal locations east of Fortaleza (wilderness scenes for "The Voyage")
3. Olinda, Pernambuco (*jangadeiros'* arrival on the beach; *jangadeiros'* visits to Carmo Cathedral and São Bento monastery)
4. Recife, Pernambuco (*jangadeiros'* visits to São Pedro and Santo Antônio churches)
5. Itapoã, Bahia (*jangadeiros'* meeting with *saveiro* fishermen; "Courtship"; Sobrinho

- builds a home for himself and his bride; domestic scenes between Sobrinho and Francisca; "Bringing the News" [second version]; Sobrinho learns to hunt)
6. São Salvador da Bahia (arrival of the *São Pedro* at Mercado Modelo wharf; visits of *jangadeiros* to Santa Barbara Church and Pelourinho District)
 7. Rio de Janeiro (Barra da Tijuca, Copacabana Beach, Praia do Flamengo [Iate Clube], Baía da Guanabara, Praça Mauá—all used to reenact the *jangadeiros*' arrival in Rio)

Production Headquarters and Lodging

Jangada Clube and Excelsior Hotel, Fortaleza, Ceará; Grande Hotel, Recife, Pernambuco; Palace Hotel, Salvador, Bahia

Shooting Dates

Rio de Janeiro: mid-March to late May 1942; Northeast Brazil: mid-June to 24 July 1942

Footage

15 reels, or 13,978 feet, of positive nitrate and corresponding black-and-white negative recorded in November 1952 inventory at RKO vault. Color footage shot for this episode is most probably included in the "Carnaval" section of the same inventory listed above. A June 2000 inventory conducted at the UCLA Film and Television Archive in Los Angeles reveals the survival of 52, cans or 63,950 feet, of black-and-white nitrate negative, of which approximately 35,950 feet have been preserved and 28,000 feet remain unpreserved.

NOTES

The following abbreviations are used throughout the notes:

CG	cablegram
LS	handwritten letter (signed)
TDS	typed document (signed)
TLS	typed letter (signed)
TM	typed memo
TMS	typed memo (signed)

INTRODUCTION: LOCATING ORSON WELLES'S *IT'S ALL TRUE*

1. The 1993 reconstruction was directed, written, and produced by Bill Krohn, Myron Meisel, and the late Richard Wilson, with financing from Les Films Balenciaga and was released in English-speaking and non-European, non-Francophone territories by Paramount Pictures, Inc. A DVD of the film was released by Paramount Pictures in November 2004.
2. Wilson, "It's Not *Quite* All True," 188–193. This essay appeared in rebuttal to Charles Higham's account following the rediscovery of film footage in the Paramount Pictures Film Library in 1969, "It's All True," 92–98.
3. The first of a quartet Sganzerla directed on Welles's sojourn in Brazil, followed by *A linguagem de Orson Welles* (*The Language of Orson Welles*, 1990), *Tudo É Brasil* (*All Is Brazil*, 1998), and *O Signo do Caos* (*The Sign of Chaos*, 2003). See ch. 7.
4. Sherman, *It's All True*. The play was first produced by Necessary Angel and Taragon Theater and was directed by Richard Rose, in Toronto, Canada, 1999.
5. The first epithet is from Allais, "Orson Welles," 3–80. "Curse" is used to characterize the entire production in Jewell, "Orson Welles, George Schaefer, and *It's All True*," 325–335; also, in his own account of the "Carnaval" episode in a program of the *Orson Welles' Sketchbook* television series produced for the BBC in 1955, Welles claims, somewhat tongue in cheek, that a "voodoo"-type spell was cast on the project.

6. Rosenbaum, *Greed*, 52–53, 59.
7. As formulated by the late French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, the habitus is founded on the “structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g. the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition); it operates as a “structured structure(s) predisposed to function as [a] structuring structure(s).” That is, it involves the collective attempt to reproduce objective structures that are the product of past practices, without necessarily involving the conscious “obedience to rules” or “the orchestrating action of a conductor.” See Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 72.
8. Unconscious history is composed of social forces and motives that escape conscious recognition and full enunciation yet can work to shape the turn of events at any given point in time; see Braudel, *On History*, 27–54.
9. See *ibid.*, 44–45, and Bloch, *The Historian’s Craft*, 183.
10. The preservation has been undertaken, first, through the efforts of the late Richard Wilson and the National Center for Film and Video Preservation at the American Film Institute beginning in 1985; second, through the assemblage of restored Technicolor and black-and-white rushes for the 1993 reconstruction directed by Wilson, Myron Meisel, and Bill Krohn; and, finally, through my own efforts in collaboration with the UCLA Film and Television Archive since 2000 to preserve as much footage as possible using donations made to the *It’s All True* Preservation Project. Up until the mid-1950s, most films were shot and printed on nitrocellulose, a self-inflammable material that has an average shelf life of about fifty years. Much of the preservation work done during the late twentieth century involved the laboratory transfer of positive and negative (if available) to the more stable, yet also physically vulnerable, acetate medium. Today, more durable and resilient polyester has replaced acetate as the preservation medium of choice.
11. See Pinel, “La restauration des films et les variations du texte filmique,” 35–36.
12. On this general subject, see Dayan, “The Tutor-Code of Classical Cinema,” 106–117; Heath, *Questions of Cinema*; and Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*.
13. See, for example, Allais, “Orson Welles”; Higham, *Orson Welles*; Leaming, *Orson Welles*; and Thomson, *Rosebud*. For notable exceptions, see Carringer, *The Making of Citizen Kane*; and Naremore, *The Magic World of Orson Welles*.
14. See Madrid, *Cine de Hoy y Mañana*, 118–120; Salles Gomes, “A aventura brasileira”; and Paranaguá, “Brésil,” 127, respectively. For early criticism that situates *Citizen Kane* and *The Magnificent Ambersons* in relation to film history, see also Villegas López, *Cine del Medio Siglo*, 169–172.
15. See Griffin, *Tinker Belles and Evil Queens*; and essays by Julianne Burton-Carvajal, Lisa Cartwright, Brian Goldfarb, and José Piedra in Smoodin, *Disney Discourse*.
16. In his massive, international history of the war, Gerhard Weinberg cites the region briefly in connection with “intelligence activities,” devoting a meager 2 pages to Latin America in a book 1,125 pages in length; see Weinberg, *A World at Arms*, 505–506. Key film histories devoted to this period, such as Doherty’s *Projections of War* and Dana Polan’s *Power and Paranoia*, also sidestep Latin America and, more particularly, the representation of Latinas/os in U.S. film, which was at one of its “high points” during the war.
17. See Benjamin, “N [Theoretics of Knowledge; Theory of Progress],” 4–7; see also Buck-Morss, *Dialectics of Seeing*, 159–201.

18. See “Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Motion Picture Division,” 22 April 1942, 5, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Record Group 4, Personal: Projects Series O, Washington, D.C. Files, Presidential Appointments, Motion Picture Division, 1941–1944, Box 7, Folder 56, Rockefeller Family Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center, North Tarrytown, New York (this folder henceforth referred to as RFA-NAR-MPD).
19. Gunning, “Film History and Film Analysis,” 6–9, 13.
20. For a discussion of labor unrest, often racially motivated, in U.S. industry during this period, see Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight*, 69–95. Hollywood was not exempt: strikes and threatened strikes (mostly over excessive work hours for a dwindling workforce due to the war draft) hit more than one production studio, including Disney.
21. The agency went through a number of name changes until it was absorbed into the Department of State in the postwar period. I have chosen to use the acronym OCIAA, by which it was known for most of the war period between July 1941 and March 1945. For further details, see Rowland, *A History of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs*; and Anthony, “Introduction,” in *Records of the Office of Inter-American Affairs: Inventory of Record Group 229*.
22. Presented to U.S. Congress by President James Monroe on 2 December 1823, the “Monroe Doctrine,” as it has come to be known, called for a fundamental distinction between American foreign policy and that of Europe, parts of which still stood in colonial relationship to the Americas, such that “any attempt on their [Europe’s] part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere [would be considered by the United States] as dangerous to our peace and safety”; from the Monroe Doctrine, cited in Richardson, *Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, 2:287.
23. See Balio, “Part III: A Mature Oligopoly,” in Balio, *American Film Industry*, 281; and Sklar, *Movie-Made America*, 269, respectively.
24. See Sklar, *Movie-Made America*, 251, for the Army Pictorial Division; see Barsam, *Non-fiction Film*, 218–223; and Doherty, *Projections of War*, 23, 70–82, 145–148, 212–221, and passim for the OWI; see Balio, “Part III: A Mature Oligopoly,” 280; and Rowland, *A History of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs*, for the OCIAA-MPD.
25. For the major studios’ commitment to make nonprofit films beginning in 1941, see Sklar, *Movie-Made America*, 251.
26. See Vasey, *The World According to Hollywood*, 119–120, 141–142, 170–175.
27. See, for example, “New Script Quest Points to Pix Biz Going the South American Way,” *Variety* Wednesday, 25 October 1939, 5.
28. See Guback, “Hollywood’s International Market,” in Balio, *American Film Industry*, 470; and Vasey, “Foreign Parts,” 213 and 233n3.
29. See MacDougall, *Transcultural Cinema*, 245.
30. See Rowe and Schelling, *Memory and Modernity*, 18. See also Rama, *La transculturación narrativa en América Latina*.
31. See Karen Cordero Reiman, “Constructing a Modern Mexican Art, 1910–1940,” in Oles, *South of the Border*, 13, 15, 17; see also Mary Kay Vaughn, “Transnational Processes and the Rise and Fall of the Mexican Cultural State: Notes from the Past,” in Joseph, Rubenstein, and Zolov, *Fragments of a Golden Age*, 472–473. Of

- course, *mestizaje* has different sociohistorical uses and meanings in the Brazilian context.
32. For the Group Theatre and the Federal Theatre Project, see Houseman, *Run-Through*, 173–205, 208–215, 220–224, 230–279; Brady, *Citizen Welles*, 73–117; Leaming, *Orson Welles*; and Callow, *Orson Welles*, 193–307. For the Welles-Blitztein collaboration, *The Cradle Will Rock*, see James Pepper’s “Introduction” and Jonathan Rosenbaum’s “Afterword,” in Welles, *The Cradle Will Rock*, 7–11 and 113–122, respectively. See also Denning, *The Cultural Front*, 362–402, for a contextual analysis of Welles’s theatrical activity. For the modern music gatherings, see Copland and Perlis, *Copland, 1900 through 1942*, 192. For Mexican artistic circles, including composer Carlos Chávez, painter Diego Rivera, cartoonist Miguel Covarrubias, and filmmaker Chano Urueta, see Ramón, *Dolores del Río*, 198, 209.
 33. See Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, especially 3–17, 21–30.
 34. See the digitized version of the novel with an explanation of reading options at <http://www.juliocortazar.com.ar/obras.htm>.
 35. These include Brady, *Citizen Welles*; Callow, *Orson Welles*; Higham, *Orson Welles*; Leaming, *Orson Welles*; and Thomson, *Rosebud*.
 36. Leaming, *Orson Welles*, vii.
 37. Building on a taxonomic category formulated by Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni, Robert Stam uses “fissure film” to refer to works that might superficially resemble the “dominant cinema” yet generate sufficient “internal criticism” to produce a rupture. Stam, “From Realism to Intertextuality,” in Stam, Burgoyne, and Flitterman-Lewis, *New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics*, 196–197.
 38. See LaCapra, “History, Language, and Reading: Waiting for Crillon,” 819–824.
 39. It is important to note that Richard Wilson, who initiated the preservation and reconstruction of *It’s All True* in the eighties, was adamantly opposed to a cosmetic treatment of its gaps and imperfections; Richard Wilson, interview with the author, audiotape recording, New York, New York, 14 May 1988.
 40. Veyne, *Writing History*, 13.
 41. See, for example, Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” in Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 161; and Foucault, “What Is an Author?” in Foucault, *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, especially 121–132.
 42. See French and James, “Oral History, Identity Formation, and Working-Class Mobilization,” in French and James, *Gendered Worlds of Latin American Women Workers*, 299 and *passim*.
 43. Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, 92–93, 96–97, 134.
 44. See, for example, Clifford and Marcus, *Writing of Culture*; and Behar, *Translated Woman*, especially “Preface” and “Introduction: The Talking Serpent”; see also Marilyn Strathern, “Out of Context: The Persuasive Fictions of Anthropology,” *Current Anthropology* 28 (1987): 251–281, quoted in MacDougall, *Transcultural Cinema*, 85.

CHAPTER 1: IN PRODUCTION, 1941–1942

1. Compare the accounts of *It’s All True* provided by Welles in André Bazin, Charles Bitsch, and Jean Domarchi, “Entretien avec Orson Welles,” in Bazin and others,

- La politique des auteurs*, 221–222; Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 153–155; “The Orson Welles Story,” part 1, BBC Television; and “Bonito,” and “Magic,” television programs, *Orson Welles’ Sketchbook* series, produced by Huw Wheldon, BBC Television, 1955.
2. See the mixed reviews of Welles’s theatrical and cinematic adaptations of Shakespeare, discussed in Anderegg, *Orson Welles, Shakespeare, and Popular Culture*, especially chaps. 2, 5, and, 6.
 3. As historian Marc Bloch has written, “[W]e can never establish a date, we can never verify, and, in short, we can never interpret a document except by inserting it into a chronological series or a synchronous whole”; Bloch, *Historian’s Craft*, 110.
 4. “Orson Welles May Do Huey Long Life,” *Hollywood Reporter*, 16 May 1941; and “Welles Prodded to Take Up ‘Journey,’” *Hollywood Reporter*, 11 July 1941. See also <http://louisianahistory.ourfamily.com>.
 5. For more on Landru, see <http://www.fortunecity.com/roswell/streiber/273/landru.mo.htm> (accessed 24 February 2002).
 6. The Mexican painter Diego Rivera reports seeing Welles and del Río as guests at Chaplin’s home in the spring of 1940; Rivera, with March, *My Art, My Life*, 146. Welles himself mentions meeting Chaplin through Aldous Huxley and King Vidor, without specifying a date; see Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 135. For Chaplin’s recruitment of Welles, see “Chaplin and Morros After Welles,” *Hollywood Reporter*, 17 March 1941.
 7. There is little concrete evidence of exactly when Welles approached Chaplin with this project. Chaplin’s own account juxtaposes the Landru proposal with a political rally at Carnegie Hall in support of a second front for the Allied forces, at which both he and Welles delivered speeches in early 1943. Frank Brady situates the Landru story subsequent to the shooting of *It’s All True* and closer to the production of *The Lady from Shanghai* (1946). However, Barbara Leaming situates *Lady Killer* immediately following the release of *Citizen Kane*, which makes the most sense, given Welles’s standing social acquaintance with Chaplin and Chaplin’s contemporaneous efforts to recruit him. The Leaming chronology is corroborated by Jonathan Rosenbaum, who mentions in his own chronology of Welles’s career that projects with the related titles *The Lady Killer*, *Landru*, *The Life of Desire*, and *Bluebeard* were all registered with the Motion Picture Producers’ Association as of 20 June 1941; see Brady, *Citizen Welles*, 416–417; Chaplin, *My Autobiography*, 409–412; Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 219–221; and Jonathan Rosenbaum, “Welles’ Career: A Chronology,” in Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 365.
 8. See Chaplin, *My Autobiography*, 412–413.
 9. For his part, Welles claimed that he contributed more than the general concept of Landru, having drafted a screenplay and discussed specific scenes with Chaplin that actually appeared in the later work, and that Chaplin had declined to collaborate because he did not want to act under Welles’s direction; see Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 220, and Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 135.
 10. See Richard Griffith, “The Film since Then,” in Rotha, *The Film Till Now*, 512.
 11. Calder-Marshall, *The Way to Santiago*; see also “RKO Buys ‘Santiago’ for Orson Welles,” *Hollywood Reporter*, 17 January 1941; and “Next Welles Film at RKO after ‘Son’ Opens,” *Hollywood Reporter*, 10 March 1941. Exploratory shots for this

film were taken by Welles around this time on 16mm film during a scouting trip with del Río to Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula. The third and final screenplay for this film was completed by the end of March 1941. See Rosenbaum, "Welles' Career," 362.

12. See Rivera, *My Art, My Life*, 142–143. For an academic source, see Bryce Wood, *The Making of the Good Neighbor Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), cited in Connell-Smith, *The United States and Latin America*, 175.
13. *Jump for Joy* opened at the Mayan Theater on 10 July 1941 for a three-month run, starring Dorothy Dandridge, Ivy Anderson, and Herb Jeffries, with music written by Duke Ellington and Hal Borne. See Travis, *The Duke Ellington Primer*, 39; and Ellington, *Music Is My Mistress*, 177–179. For Welles's conversation with Ellington regarding *It's All True*, see *ibid.*, 240.
14. See "Memorandum of Proposed Deal with Orson Welles for Two Pictures—Predicated on Conversations at Which Mr. Joseph Breen, Mr. Orson Welles and Mr. C.J. Schaefer were Present," 25 July 1941, encl. C.J. Schaefer to Joseph Breen, TLS, 25 July 1941, microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, Hatcher Memorial Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan (henceforth referred to as Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers). Shooting for *The Magnificent Ambersons* did not begin until 28 October 1941. See "Orson Welles Gets Off on 'Ambersons,'" *Hollywood Reporter*, 29 October 1941; and Rosenbaum, "Welles' Career," 367.
15. See "Next Film at RKO after 'Son' Opens," *Hollywood Reporter*, 10 March 1941; and "Welles Prodded to Take Up 'Journey,'" *Hollywood Reporter*, 11 July 1941. The order of shooting for these different projects changed considerably between summer and fall of 1941. *Magnificent Ambersons* was to have begun shooting in mid-September, followed by *Journey into Fear* and *It's All True*, prior to *Mexican Melodrama*; see "Welles Tells All—Mostly Promises," *Hollywood Reporter*, 23 July 1941. As it turned out, *Journey into Fear* would be the fourth Mercury film to go into production under contract to RKO, after *The Magnificent Ambersons*.
16. See "RKO Gets Up Production Steam," *Hollywood Reporter*, 20 March 1941; and "Schaefer Due Today to Put RKO into High Gear," *Hollywood Reporter*, 7 April 1941.
17. See Rosenbaum, "Welles' Career," 366–369, for details.
18. *Native Son* opened to favorable reviews at the St. James Theater on Broadway on 25 March 1941 and continued to circulate to New York "neighborhood" venues, such as the Apollo Theater in Harlem; see Fabre, *The Unfinished Quest of Richard Wright*, 211, 216.
19. Mercury had moved its production unit to the Pathé lot in August 1941; see "Orson Welles Hangs Hat on Pathé Lot," *Hollywood Reporter*, 13 August 1941.
20. "Orson Welles Tries Four-Unit Program," *Hollywood Reporter*, 25 August 1941.
21. See Harry Brandt in *Hollywood Reporter*, 6 August 1941; and "Orson Welles Tries Four-Unit Program," 1. The attribution of the idea to Brandt was initially suggested to me by Richard Wilson; Wilson, interview by author, 14 May 1988.
22. Although this theme is readily apparent from a reading of the four North American scripts, it was initially brought to my attention by Richard Wilson; Wilson, interview by author, 14 May 1988.
23. See Orson Welles to Mr. Joe Breen, 10 July 1941, 3, *It's All True* File, Orson Welles

Manuscripts, Manuscripts Department, Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana (henceforth referred to as Lilly Library).

24. Armstrong, *Swing That Music*.
25. A contract was signed between Mercury Productions and Duke Ellington in July 1942; see Orson Welles to Mr. Joe Breen, 10 July 1941, 3, Lilly Library. See also Richard Wilson to Mr. Danny Winkler, TM, 19 August 1941, 1, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
26. See Richard Wilson to Mr. Danny Winkler, TM, 19 August 1941, 3, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
27. See “It’s All True,” rough draft continuity, screenplay by Elliot Paul, 29 August 1941, Box 16, Folder 16, Lilly Library; and “It’s All True (Jazz Sequence),” first draft continuity, screenplay by Elliot Paul, 5 September 1941, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
28. See “Hazel Scott for Satchmo Film,” *Metronome* 57 (October 1941): 1; and “Lil Armstrong Snubbed by Hollywood!” *Down Beat*, 1 October 1941, 4.
29. Ellington, *Music Is My Mistress*, 240–241.
30. Curt Jerde, curator of the William Ransom Hogan Jazz Archive, conversation with author, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, 18 March 1988.
31. Charles Higham has claimed that color storyboards were done and test footage shot for this episode; however, I have not located any evidence of this to date in any archives. Higham also credits David Stuart with the screenplay, although, again, this credit does not appear on any of the script versions I have had access to; see Higham, “It’s All True,” 93.
32. The scenes are labeled “Int. Miniature Car-Day,” “Ext. Foolish House-Day,” and “Int. Crystal Maze-Day” in the “Love Story” screenplay. Upon joining Mercury Productions, Fante had just cowritten an unproduced screenplay with Norman Foster, based on his “pre-Beat” novel, *Ask the Dust*; as of September 1941, he would join Welles’s writing staff for the Lady Esther radio show. Sources for this section include “Johnnie [Fante] to his Mother and Father,” 2 August 1941, and “Johnnie [Fante] to his Mother,” [ca. August 1941], reproduced with an introduction in Fante, *Selected Letters*, 194–196; see also 161, 340; “Love Story,” shooting script by John Fante and Norman Foster, n.d., 1–10, Book 16, Folder 1, Lilly Library. James Naremore has also noted the resemblance between the “Love Story” sequence described here and the mirror sequence in *The Lady from Shanghai*; see Naremore, “Between Works and Texts,” 21–22.
33. See Richard Wilson to Mr. Danny Winkler [Mercury Productions, Los Angeles], 29 July 1941, Lilly Library; and Jack Moss to Mr. Collier Young [RKO Radio Pictures, Los Angeles], TLS, 21 July 1941, Lilly Library.
34. “Johnnie [John Fante] to [his] Mother and Father,” 2 August 1941, 195.
35. See Padilla, *Historia de la Plaza El Toreo*, 1:26. The date of the original incident was 16 February 1908.
36. I am grateful to Tomás Pérez Turrent for suggesting these genealogical links. A *corrido* is a sung ballad, usually accompanied by acoustic guitar, widely used in Mexico to narrate national and local history. It was greatly popularized during the Mexican Revolution and is still a staple form of entertainment and political commentary in the United States–Mexico borderlands.

37. The story was sold to Flaherty by Cliff McCarthy of Santa Fe, New Mexico, on 9 November 1928 for one dollar and “other good and valuable considerations”; see “Bill of Sale, from Cliff McCarthy, lawful owner, of Santa Fe, New Mexico, to Robert J. Flaherty,” TDS, 9 November 1928. Two early versions of “The Story of Bonito, the Bull” were later registered under Flaherty’s name in 1928. All these documents are on Reel 27, Box 47, of the Robert J. Flaherty Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Butler Memorial Library at Columbia University, New York, New York (henceforth referred to as Robert J. Flaherty Papers).
38. According to Naum Kleiman, in “Los archivos de la Unión Soviética,” *Secuencias* (Madrid, Spain), 2 (April 1995): 93, cited in de la Vega Alfaro, *Del muro a la pantalla*, 34. I have been unable to locate any evidence of these plans in the Robert J. Flaherty Papers. The date and location of the original copyright transfer indicate that Flaherty most likely obtained the elements of the first version of the Bonito story during this same shoot; located on Reel 27, Box 47, Robert J. Flaherty Papers. The Acoma film was never completed; for background, see Barsam, *The Vision of Robert Flaherty*, 49.
39. The short story, “The Captain’s Chair,” appeared in a series of installments coauthored by John Chapman Hilder in *Elks Magazine*, November 1928–March 1929, Reel 25, Box 43, Robert J. Flaherty Papers. It was then adapted by Denis Johnston and narrated by Flaherty for British television nine years later as “The Last Voyage of Captain Grant,” followed by its publication as a book by Flaherty, *The Captain’s Chair: A Story of the North*. For the play, see Rotha, *Robert J. Flaherty*, 184–185.
40. See Robert J. Flaherty, “The Captain’s Chair,” TMS, n.d., and Luise [sic] Johnson, “Reader’s Report—‘The Captain’s Chair,’” 10 March 1929, *It’s All True* File, RKO Collection: Scripts, RKO Pictures, Inc., Collection 003, Theater Arts Library, University Research Library, University of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California (henceforth referred to as Scripts, UCLA Theater Arts Library).
41. See Richard Wilson to Mr. Danny Winkler, 29 July 1941, Lilly Library; this document clearly locates the lease of these rights in 1941, contrary to Charles Higham’s assertion that Welles had bought Flaherty’s story in 1938; see Higham, “It’s All True,” 93.
42. “Data on Production #363, ‘It’s All True,’” handwritten document, n.d., microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers. According to this document, Welles and crew departed for Mexico City, via El Paso, Texas, on 16 September 1941.
43. These latter films were *Ecce Omo* (a project Lorentz never completed under contract to RKO) and *The Fight for Life* (1940).
44. The director of *Santa* was the same Antonio Moreno, the actor of Spanish origin who had been a star on the silent Hollywood screen. For additional information on these and other bullfighting films, see García Riera, *Historia documental del cine mexicano*, 1:47–54, 241–242; and Meyer, *Testimonios para la historia del cine mexicano*, 1:21, 1:23.
45. See Carmen Elisa Gómez, *María Félix en Imágenes* (Guadalajara: Patronato de Cine Mexicano en Guadalajara/Universidad de Guadalajara; Mexico City: Instituto Mexicano de la Cinematografía, 2001), 34–35, 42–47, 50–51, 54–55, 58–59, 64–65, 80–81, and *passim*.

46. See García Riera, *Historia documental del cine mexicano*, 2:202.
47. Esperanza de la Torre Madrazo, interview by author, audiotape recording, La Punta hacienda, Jalisco, Mexico, 16 March 1991; and Fernando López, interview by author, audiotape recording, Pachuca, Hidalgo, Mexico, 19 February 1991. Additional sources for Mexican bull culture are César Andrea, conversation with author, Aguascalientes, Aguascalientes, Mexico, 19 March 1991; and Conchita Cintrón, interview by author, audiotape recording, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, 21 March 1991.
48. See Norman [Foster] to Orson Welles, 25 September 1941, Lilly Library.
49. Only cows are tested inside the bullring; male bulls are *never* brought into the ring until the actual fighting takes place, for to do so would decrease their ferocity and dampen the element of suspense for all concerned; Esperanza de la Torre Madrazo, interview by author, 16 March 1991.
50. Next to blood relations, *compadrazgo* is traditionally the most important form of social bond throughout Latin America. Established through godparenting, it has also been an important form of socioeconomic “insurance” for the underprivileged classes. In 1940s Mexico, it was not unusual for bullfighters to become compadres with ranch owners, as was the case for matador Fermín “Armillita” Espinosa in relation to Doña María Luisa Madrazo, wife of Madrazo y García Granados; see Madrazo, *Cornadas al viento*, 49. The chronology and shooting locations for “My Friend Bonito” have been culled from Joe Noriega to Mr. Jack Moss, 2 October 1941; Joe Noriega to Dick [Wilson], 7 October 1941; Joe Noriega to Jack [Moss], 10 October 1941; Joe Noriega to Mr. Jack Moss, 24 November 1941; Joe [Noriega] to Jack [Moss], 3 December 1941, all in Lilly Library; and Silvério Pérez, interview by author, audiotape recording, Pentecostés, Texcoco, Mexico, 5 March 1991.
51. Orson [Welles] to Norman Foster [Mexico City], 18 October 1941, Lilly Library. See also Orson [Welles] to Jesús Solórzano, CG, 18 October 1941, Francisco Madrazo, Sr., Papers, Madrazo Family Archive, La Punta hacienda, Jalisco, Mexico, in which Welles states “tienta superb couldn’t possibly be improved upon.”
52. *Heróis do Mar*, *Cine Jornal Brasileiro* series, no. 86, 15 November 1941, DIP, Cinemateca Brasileira, São Paulo, Brazil. The newsreel service was created in 1938 for the purpose of documenting events of national significance. See Simis, *Estado e Cinema no Brasil*, 45–64.
53. The law-decree is registered as Decreto-Lei No. 3.832 de 18 de novembro de 1941, in República dos Estados Unidos do Brasil, *Coleção das Leis de 194–*, 7:463–466. Upon their incorporation into the Seamen’s Institute, the *jangadeiros* became legally entitled to better social assistance, retirement, medical care, loans, pensions, and other benefits, such as the national minimum wage; see Edmar Morel, “A História da Jangada no Brasil,” treatment for “Jangadeiros,” TMS, 31, Lilly Library; and “President’s Decree,” [paraphrasing of the law-decree by the Welles research team], 1, Box 17, Folder 5, Lilly Library. In addition to standard social benefits, the *jangadeiros* also requested government enforcement of a law prohibiting the construction of pens used to trap fish, equal consideration with respect to other fishing areas in Brazil, and a just division of the catch; see “We are going to tell President Getúlio Vargas three things . . .,” script fragment, n.d.; and “What Jacaré Pointed Out to Vargas,” script fragment, n.d., both Box 17,

- Folder 5, Lilly Library; the request is reproduced verbatim in “Jacaré’s Letter to Vargas,” English trans., n.d., Box 17, Folder 5, Lilly Library.
54. De Souza, “Ação e Imaginário de uma Ditadura,” 390–391.
 55. “Four Men on a Raft,” 30.
 56. Discussions of Welles’s appointment began at the OCIAA as early as November 1941, following Walt Disney’s return from South America to the United States. Agreements were reached with RKO for a film about Carnival to be shot by Welles in Brazil in early December 1941. However, the contract stipulating the OCIAA’s cosponsorship of the project did not go into effect until January 1942. See Assis Figueiredo [Brazilian Department of Press and Propaganda, Rio de Janeiro] to [Phil] Reisman [New York], 5 December 1941, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers; Bruno Cheli [Rio de Janeiro] to Mr. William Gordon [Los Angeles], TLS, 12 December 1941, Lilly Library; and Francis Alstock [Motion Picture Division, OCIAA] to Selective Service Board no. 246 [Beverly Hills, California], 1 September 1942, Lilly Library.
 57. Edmar Morel, interview by author and Marcos Bonisson, 8mm videotape recording, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 29 August 1989.
 58. In her biography, Leaming merely alludes to Welles’s “physical condition”; see Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 231. Welles’s FBI file states that the reason for dispensation from military service was “inverted flat feet”; “Orson Welles, alias George Orson Welles,” Federal Bureau of Investigation file no. 100–5440, 21 October, 1941, 1, Los Angeles, California, accessed at http://www.apbnews_welles1.pdf. Welles himself cited the flat feet, a weak heart, and asthma as reasons for not enlisting, in an interview conducted upon his arrival in Rio de Janeiro, “Orson Welles não se casou com Dolores del Río,” *Cine-Radio Jornal* (Rio de Janeiro), 11 February 1942, 6.
 59. Welles refers to a fourth episode to be located in the United States as late as mid-July 1942; see “Orson Welles Filmando Aspectos do Recife e Olinda,” *Jornal do Commercio* (Recife, Brazil), 15 July 1942; and “Orson Welles Acha-se, Desde Ontem, no Recife: Vem o famoso cinematografista filmar aspectos do Recife e Olinda,” *Jornal Pequeno* (Recife, Brazil), 15 July 1942; Louis Armstrong was also summoned to work at the RKO studio in June 1942. The Andean story appears as a segue between the “My Friend Bonito” and “Carnaval” episodes in a script submitted by Welles to RKO for approval in 1943. See Orson Welles, “It’s All True,” screenplay, 2 September 1943, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, 23–30.
 60. Welles’s planned itinerary as “Good Will” ambassador included Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Guatemala, and Mexico, in addition to Brazil. From a report enclosed in Ray Josephs, Buenos Aires, to Francis Alstock, Washington, D.C., TDS, 5 August 1942, Studio Records, RKO General Archives, Los Angeles, California (henceforth referred to as RKO General Archives).
 61. The OCIAA’s contribution was to be the equivalent of 30 percent of the total production cost, as long as it did not exceed this amount. See “Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Motion Picture Division,” 22 April 1942, 5, RFA-NAR-MPD; and William Gordon to Mr. C. W. Koerner, “Report on Meeting of the Board of Directors of Motion Picture Society for the Americas, May 24, 1943,” 25 May 1943, 1, RKO General Archives.

62. Welles later described the appointment as “a nonpaying job for the government that I did because it was put to me as a sort of duty.” In Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 156; see also Wilson, “It’s Not *Quite* All True,” 189.
63. From the records, it appears that RKO covered most of Welles’s expenses (with the exception of a special diplomatic trip he made to Argentina in April 1942) throughout the “Carnaval” and “Jangadeiros” shoots until the studio issued a disclaimer published in Brazilian newspapers in late July 1942. Welles’s subsequent travels through South and Central America were covered entirely by the Coordinator’s Office, as was customary for such appointments.
64. Douglas Fairbanks Jr., interview by author and Antônio Pedro Tota, audiotape recording, New York, New York, 1 April 1989.
65. See Augusto, “Hollywood Looks at Brazil,” 356–357.
66. Madrazo, *Cornadas al Viento*, 68–69; and Silverio Pérez, interview by author, 5 March 1991. An early memo from Mercury Productions also refers to Chucho Solórzano in buoyant terms as “religion at the box office”; Jack Moss to Mr. [Reginald] Armour [RKO Radio Studio, Los Angeles], 15 August 1941, Lilly Library.
67. Domingo Soler also figured prominently as a priest, and occasionally in the role of Mexican national heroes, such as Pancho Villa, in *Vámonos con Pancho Villa!* (*Let’s Fight with Pancho Villa!* dir. Fernando de Fuentes, 1935), and the independence fighter priest Padre Morelos, in *El Padre Morelos* (dir. Miguel Contreras Torres, 1942). See García Riera, *Los hermanos Soler*, 17, 21, 47–52, 72, 81–82, 91, 96–97, 110–111.
68. See, for example, Carlos Monsiváis, “Mexican Cinema: Of Myths and Demystifications,” trans. Mike González, in King, López, and Alvarado, *Mediating Two Worlds*, 139–146; and Rozado, *Cine y realidad social en México*, 15–27.
69. For information on the latter, see Parker, *Carlos Chávez*, ii, 12–13.
70. Herivelto Martins’s son, Pery Ribeiro, also played a prominent role in the “Carnaval” episode, then went on to dub the voice of Bambi in the Portuguese version of Disney’s eponymous animated feature; see João de Barro, “A colaboração dos brasileiros nos desenhos de Disney,” *A Cena Muda* (Rio de Janeiro) no. 116 (11 August 1942): 14.
71. Jesús (Chucho) Martínez Gil, interview by Alfonso Morales, Museo Nacional de Culturas Populares, Mexico City, Mexico, 1990.
72. See Johnson, *The Film Industry in Brazil*, 44–45, 57. The connection to the DIP was imparted to me by George Fanto in a series of interviews conducted in 1987 and 1988.
73. “Acontecimentos da Semana,” *A Cena Muda*, no. 1061 (22 July 1941): 28.
74. Assis Figueiredo (DIP) to Phil Reisman (RKO), 5 December 1941, Lilly Library.
75. From Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda, “Welles in Brazil,” research contributed to the *It’s All True* panel, “Orson Welles: Theatre, Radio, Film: A Major Retrospective and Critical Examination,” Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, New York, New York, 25 April–15 May 1988.
76. Pan-American Day was launched by President Franklin D. Roosevelt shortly after his inauguration on 12 April 1933; see Connell-Smith, *The United States and Latin America*, 159. According to Susan J. Douglas, at the time of the war, NBC had two networks, Red and Blue, and the smaller, Blue network was often used for public service broadcasting, until a national Report on Chain Broadcasting

- forced its divestment—whereupon it became the ABC radio network—in 1943; Susan J. Douglas, e-mail correspondence with the author, 29 May 2006; see also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_broadcasting#United_States, for the historical transition from NBC Blue to ABC radio network.
77. See the roster of “Good Will” ambassadors in chapter 6.
 78. “Quais os Melhores Filmes de 1941? ‘Cidadão Kane’ passa dividir as honras do primeiro lugar com a ‘Longa Viagem de Volta,’” *Cine-Radio Jornal*, 5. Ginger Rogers won first place as best female actress, followed by Joan Crawford and Bette Davis. See also “Orson Welles recebe, no Plaza, os diplomas de ‘Cidadão Kane,’” *Cine-Radio Jornal*, 25 February 1942, 16; and de Souza, “A Carga da Brigada Ligeira,” for additional information on the reception of *Citizen Kane* in the Southern Cone at this time. For contemporary U.S. criticism of *Citizen Kane*, see “New York Critics Hand Raves to ‘Citizen Kane,’” *Hollywood Reporter*, 2 May 1941.
 79. See Claudio España, “Emergencia y tensiones en el cine argentino de los años cincuenta,” *Nuevo Texto Crítico* 21/22 (January–December 1998): 53, 70–71n10.
 80. Robert Wise, quoted in Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 115.
 81. For Miriam Geiger, see Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 232; for Welles’s open criticism of Hollywood’s representation of Latin America, see “Orson Welles não se casou com Dolores del Río,” 6–7. *Pro-filmic* refers to all events that are designated for inclusion in a film’s diegesis.
 82. See Connell-Smith, *The United States and Latin America*, 180–181; and Brune, *A Chronological History of United States Foreign Policy*, 2:789.
 83. Not much is known about Shores, except that he had directed a feature-length film for RKO titled *Jazz Age*, in 1929, and that, like Joe Biroc, he hailed from New York; see Neibaur, *The RKO Features*, 131–132.
 84. Joseph Biroc reports traveling to Argentina for the purpose of developing this footage in March 1942; Joseph Biroc, interview by author, Bill Krohn, and Myron Meisel, audiotape recording, Encino, California, 25 September 1992.
 85. According to Meltzer’s great-niece, Nancy Eddy, Meltzer was a respected jazz pianist on the West Coast prior to leaving for Brazil; Nancy Eddy, telephone conversation with author, 30 January 2000. Originally listed as a “radio writer” for the South American expedition, Meltzer collaborated intensively on the development of the Brazilian film episodes; see “Transportation to South America,” n.d., *It’s All True* File, RKO Collection: Production Information Files, RKO Pictures, Inc., Collection 003, Box RKO-P-127, circulation N, UCLA Theater Arts Library (henceforth referred to as Production Information Files, UCLA Theater Arts Library). *It’s All True* was one of Meltzer’s last film projects. He was killed in active military duty in Europe two years later.
 86. See “Information on the Research Staff,” n.d., Lilly Library. For the “brain trust,” see “It’s All True: Welles hires ‘Brain Trust’ to Keep Movie So-Named on Straight . . .,” n.d., Lilly Library.
 87. Geraldo Caboré, telephone conversation with author, 2 February 1991, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. A lifelong friend of Grande Othelo, the late Caboré claimed to have taught Welles to play the *pandeiro* and accompanied him on many of his trips to Rio’s favelas.
 88. In the terminology of philosopher and critic Mikhail Bakhtin, *heterophonic* means

- a diversity of individual voices heard in a given setting; here, each samba school singing group constitutes a “voice.” See Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 56.
89. Herivelto Martins, interview by author, audiotape recording, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 4 January 1991; and Caboré, telephone conversation with author, 2 February 1991. According to Caboré, Welles commissioned the recording of four popular songs at Odeon studios for “Carnaval”: “Um a Zero,” “Lero-Lero,” “Nega do Cabelo Duro,” and “Carinhoso,” whereas “Adeus, Praça Onze” was recorded in its entirety by the Trio de Ouro for sound track purposes on the Continental label in Rio.
 90. From Caboré, telephone conversation with author, 2 February 1991; Wilson, “It’s Not *Quite* All True,” 191–193; and Orson Welles’s own account of the “Carnaval” shoot in “Orson Welles Commentaries: On the Ousting of Getúlio Vargas,” ABC radio network, 4 November 1945, Lilly Library.
 91. See “Plan of the Work of Mr. Aydano do Couto Ferraz about the States of Baía, Sergipe, Alagoas, Pernambuco and Paraíba,” 18 March 1942, Lilly Library.
 92. See Orson Welles to Phil Reisman, CG, 15 March 1942, Lilly Library; and Orson Welles to Jack Moss, 14 March 1942, Peter Bogdanovich Papers, Los Angeles, California. Welles’s intent to proceed with Technicolor in “Jangadeiros” is also implied in his decision to take Edward Pyle, a Technicolor camera operator, along on his first scouting trip to Fortaleza.
 93. See Jack Moss [presumably] to Orson Welles, 15 March 1942, Peter Bogdanovich Papers.
 94. For an alternative assessment of this and subsequent previews of *The Magnificent Ambersons* (not all of which yielded unfavorable results), see Jonathan Rosenbaum’s comments in Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 116–124.
 95. During this period, all film cans entering and leaving the country had to pass inspection by Brazilian customs, and it was to this level of DIP authority that Shores was probably making his appeal. For a general discussion of the DIP’s censorship of the arts, see Tota, “Samba da Legitimidade,” 10, 78–83, and *passim*; and Tota, *O Estado Novo*, 34–38.
 96. The details of this accident are provided with varying degrees of factual accuracy in “Brazil Hero, in Welles’ Film, Drowns,” *Hollywood Citizen-News*, 19 May 1942, 2; Richard Wilson to Herbert Drake, 19 May 1942, Peter Bogdanovich Papers; “I, Antônio Rego Passos,” 19 May 1942, Rio de Janeiro, English translation, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers; “I, Jorge Otavio Labanca,” 19 May 1942, Rio de Janeiro, English translation, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers; and Wilson, “It’s Not *Quite* All True,” 190.
 97. “The Death of ‘Jacaré’ Was Not Filmed,” *O Globo* (Rio de Janeiro), 22 May 1942, English translation, Lilly Library.
 98. This is supported by the versions presented in Higham, *The Films of Orson Welles*, 92–93; Higham, *Orson Welles*, 201–203; Jewell, “History of RKO Pictures,” 2:676; and Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 249.
 99. See Krohn, “A la recherche du film fantôme,” 27; and Wilson, “It’s Not *Quite* All True,” 192.
 100. Richard Wilson to Herbert Drake, 19 May 1942, Peter Bogdanovich Papers. See appendix 1 regarding compensation.
 101. “Orson Welles também quase morre no desastre,” in “Morreu Jacaré: O heroi

- da jangada ‘São Pedro’ afogou-se na barra da Tijuca quando filmava para Orson Welles,” *O Povo* (Fortaleza, Brazil), 9 May 1942.
102. Phil Reisman to [George Schaefer], [cablegram], n.d. [ca. early June], microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
 103. Antônio Affonso de Albuquerque, interview by author, audiotape recording, Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil, 26 November 1990. Albuquerque’s brother, Chico, was the still photographer for the “Jangadeiros” shoot in Fortaleza. See also Lynn [Shores], Rio de Janeiro, to Mr. Walter Daniels, Hollywood, TLS, 15 June 1942, 1, RKO General Archives.
 104. “As Belezas da Natureza Bahiana Atraíram o Cidadão Kane,” *Estado da Bahia* (Salvador, Brazil), 16 July 1942; “Está Pronto o Filme de Orson Welles Sobre o Brasil!” *Estado da Bahia*, 24 July 1942; “Orson Welles Acha-se, Desde Ontem, no Recife”; “Orson Welles Filmando Aspectos do Recife e Olinda”; and “São Tomé o Primeiro Local da Filmagem . . .,” *Estado da Bahia*, 17 July 1942, 3. See also “Notes on the Picture,” synopsis for “Jangadeiros,” TMs, n.d., Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers; and “Jacaré’s Diary,” English translation, n.d., Lilly Library.
 105. See “Beginning of Picture,” n.d., Box 17, Folder 5, Lilly Library; and Orson Welles, “Carnaval, Treatment for the Film Itself,” n.d., 42, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
 106. See Wise, quoted in Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 115–116.
 107. For the RKO financial situation at this time, see Jewell, with Harbin, *The RKO Story*, 168; Jewell, “History of RKO Pictures,” 2:677–681 and passim. For the top-floor shakeup at RKO, see *ibid.*, 673–674, 677–682; and “Ned Depinet Heads RKO Pictures Unit,” *New York Times*, 26 June 1942, 17.
 108. Quoted in Fowler, *Orson Welles*, 82.
 109. See Orson Welles, in Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 163.
 110. For Welles’s relative optimism, see “Orson Welles Gosta de Pimenta, mas Acha Que o Sol Nordestino Brilha Demais . . .,” *A Tarde* (Salvador, Brazil), 17 July 1942, 2; “Orson Welles Faz Declarações,” *Correio do Ceará* (Fortaleza, Brazil), 17 July 1942, 3; “Confirma-se Rompimento Orson Welles—RKO,” *Correio do Ceará*, 22 July 1942, 3; and de Moraes, *O Cinema dos Meus Olhos*, 73–74.
 111. See “Await Welles’ Return from Brazil for Second Episode of RKO Battle,” *New York Times*, 8 July 1942.
 112. See “Tentative Schedule: *It’s All True*,” 15 April 1942, 3, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
 113. David A. Shattuck [Treasurer, Technicolor Motion Picture Corporation], to RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., TLS, 6 May 1942, Lilly Library.
 114. See Elliott Paul to Orson Welles, TLS, 28 August 1941, 1, Lilly Library.
 115. William Gordon to Mr. C. W. [Charles] Koerner, 10 September 1943, 2, RKO General Archives. See also Copland and Perlis, *Copland, 1900 through 1942*, 153–155, 324–328, 380n2.
 116. Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata, aka “Grande Othelo,” interview by author, 8mm videotape recording, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 30 August 1989; Francisca Moreira da Silva, interview by Bill Krohn, DAT audio recording for 35mm film, Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil, 16 January 1993.
 117. As it happened, Jesús Vásquez Plata continued to attend boarding school in

Southern California (at RKO's expense, until 28 December 1942, thereafter at Welles's and Mercury's expense) until summer 1943; see Legal Department to Sid Rogell, 29 December 1942; and C. W. Koerner to N. Peter Rathvon, CG, 21 July 1943, both documents are from microfilm roll 4, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.

118. Years later, Moreira da Silva divulged that notwithstanding the practical difficulties, she had refused Welles's invitation, and that her refusal had interfered with Welles's plans to have the three surviving *jangadeiros* travel to Hollywood as well; Moreira da Silva, interview by Bill Krohn, 16 January 1993.
119. See Orson Welles, "It's All True," screenplay, 2 September 1943, 1, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
120. See Duke Ellington to Mercury Productions, TDS, 1 May 1942, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers; and Bob Hill, "Jazz no Cinema e no Radio," *A Cena Muda*, no. 1109 (23 June 1942): 2.
121. It is not clear exactly whom Welles eventually had in mind as the editor of *It's All True*. When asked if Welles had ever approached him about the job, Robert Wise, who edited both *Citizen Kane* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*, responded in the negative. Robert Wise, telephone conversation with the author, 4 June 2004. It is quite possible that, following the debacle of reshoots and cuts made to *The Magnificent Ambersons* in the spring of 1942, Welles wished to turn over a new leaf where creative staff on Mercury Productions was concerned. Also worth noting is José Noriega's experience as a film editor, as well as his contributions to the continuation of "My Friend Bonito" as late as 1944.

CHAPTER 2: TOWARD THE TEXT OF *IT'S ALL TRUE*

1. Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text," in *Image, Music, Text*, 157; emphasis in the original.
2. Welles, quoted in Bessy, *Orson Welles*, 99.
3. "Ambersons is the only picture of mine I've seen after it was finished and released"; Welles quoted in Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 94. See also *ibid.*, 48.
4. See MacDougall, *Transcultural Cinema*, 28–29.
5. As a film-specific term, *découpage* means the breaking down of scenes into individual shots before shooting or, as is usually the case with documentary, during shooting.
6. Benjamin, "N [Theoretics of Knowledge; Theory of Progress]," 6.
7. See Kristeva, as discussed in Stam, "From Realism to Intertextuality," 206.
8. See "Orson Welles no Recife: Vai apanhar varias cenas com os jangadeiros cearenses . . .," *Folha da Manhã* (Recife, Brazil) 8 March 1942.
9. See "Orson Welles' South American Film, with Guarantee, Interests Studios," *Variety*, 28 January 1942, 55; "Movimento Cinematográfico na Cidade das Maravilhas—Orson Welles no Rio," *Diário de Notícias* (Salvador, Bahia), 5 March 1942, 4.
10. This "random assembly" (according to the can label) on a 1,000-foot reel of nitrate positive is catalogued as F63-L10-36-M43915 at the UCLA Film and Television Archive in Los Angeles. See also J [José] Noriega to Orson [Welles],

- TLS, 14 January 1944, 1, Lilly Archive; and José Noriega, “Corrida de Toros,” continuity draft, n.d., Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
11. These scripts are as follows: “Love Story,” shooting script by John Fante and Norman Foster, 8 August 1941, Lilly Library; “It’s All True,” rough draft continuity script by Elliot Paul (corresponds to “The Story of Jazz”), 29 August 1941, RKO Scripts; “My Friend Bonito,” shooting script by Norman Foster and John Fante, 17 September 1941, “*It’s All True*” File, National Center for Film and Video Preservation, American Film Institute, Los Angeles, California (henceforth referred to as American Film Institute); and Orson Welles, “It’s All True,” supplemental shooting script, 2 September 1943, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers. The Mercury version of “The Captain’s Chair” appears to exist only in contractual form, although Flaherty did submit a treatment based on this story to RKO in 1929; see Luise Johnson, “Reader’s Report: ‘The Captain’s Chair,’” 10 March 1929, Scripts, UCLA Theater Arts Library.
 12. Examples of these materials include “Carnaval,” comprehensive treatment by Orson Welles [with Robert Meltzer], Scripts, UCLA Theater Arts Library; [Orson Welles], “Carnaval,” treatment, n.d.; “Footnotes,” production notes, n.d.; [Orson Welles], “Choro Interlude,” production notes, all from Lilly Library; for “Jangadeiros”: Edmar Morel, “The Story of the Jangada in Brazil,” 18 March 1942, English translation; “Information about Jangada,” n.d., Lilly Library; “Jacaré’s Diary,” English translation; “Jacaré’s Letter to Vargas,” n.d., English translation; “What Jacaré Pointed Out to Vargas,” [testimony of Jacaré], n.d., English translation; [Orson Welles], “Beginning of Picture,” “Other Necessary Work,” “Picture Notes,” “Some Facts,” production notes, n.d.; [Orson Welles], “Dialogue,” “Jacaré,” “Question,” n.d.; [Orson Welles], “Bringing the News,” “Essential Shots,” “Necessary Shots,” [shooting instructions], n.d.; [Orson Welles], “Notes on the Picture,” “Possibilities for Thursday,” scene list, n.d.; [Orson Welles], “The Jangado [*sic*] Itself,” “Story Line,” script outlines, n.d., all from Lilly Library.
 13. It is only obliquely alluded to in Welles’s treatment for connecting scenes between episodes, titled “It’s All True,” 2 September 1943, Lilly Library, 23–30.
 14. See Raymond Bellour, “The Unattainable Text,” in Penley, *Analysis of Film/Raymond Bellour*, 21–22.
 15. See Penley, “Introduction to ‘Metaphor/Metonymy,’” 7–28, especially 13–18; and Williams, *Figures of Desire*, 56–63.
 16. See Ropars-Wuilleumiers, *Le texte divisé*, 17–19, 122–123.
 17. See Wollen, “The Semiology of the Cinema,” in *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, 116–154; and Barthes, “Rhetoric of the Image” and “The Third Meaning,” in *Image, Music, Text*, 32–51 and 52–68, respectively.
 18. See Tom Gunning, “Narrative Discourse and the Narrator System,” in Braudy and Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism*, 473–476. For an alternate viewpoint on the prerequisites to film narration, see Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, 49–53.
 19. Gunning, “Narrative Discourse and the Narrator System,” 474, 476–477.
 20. MacDougall, *Transcultural Cinema*, 181.
 21. See Wollen, “Conclusion (1972),” in *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, 162–163.
 22. These sequencings can be found in Orson Welles, “It’s All True,” 2 September 1943, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers. I should note that this latest script

version does *not* necessarily supersede the others in approximating the sequencing of the projected authorial text, since some of these later versions were written with the purpose of *convincing RKO* that the project as a whole was still viable.

23. See “Synopsis of *It’s All True*,” n.d. [ca. mid-1942], microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
24. Flaherty, *The Captain’s Chair*, 79.
25. *Ibid.*, 9.
26. See Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, 102.
27. Robert J. Flaherty to Michael Mason, Esq., TLS, 21 April 1937, Robert J. Flaherty Papers. My comments on this episode are based on documents from the Robert J. Flaherty Papers and scripts from the UCLA Theater Arts Library, unless otherwise cited; additional information on “The Captain’s Chair” is from Barsam, *The Vision of Robert Flaherty*, 13–15, 124.
28. Luise Johnson, “The Captain’s Chair,” Pathé Studios Inc. Reader’s Report, 10 March 1929, Scripts, UCLA Theater Arts Library.
29. Reader’s Comment, “The Captain’s Chair by Robert Flaherty,” New York Office Synopsis, 5 May 1938, Scripts, UCLA Theater Arts Library.
30. *Ibid.*, 250–251; the *Eskimo* was Captain Grant’s first ship, used to travel the same trade route around Hudson’s Bay.
31. Orson Welles, Acceptance Speech on Receipt of the Life Achievement Award of the American Film Institute, transcript, 9 February 1975, Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles, California, 2.
32. See Flaherty, *The Captain’s Chair*, especially 63–64, 73–74, 76–77.
33. Benjamin, “The Storyteller,” in *Illuminations*, 95.
34. See John Fante and Norman Foster, “Love Story,” shooting script, 8 August 1941, Lilly Library.
35. All information pertaining to John Fante’s family history has been obtained from Fante’s widow, Joyce Fante; telephone conversation with the author, 11 May 1996.
36. John Fante and Norman Foster, “It’s All True, Love Story,” screenplay, n.d., Scripts, UCLA Theater Arts Library.
37. Richard Wilson, interview by author, 14 May 1988.
38. See, for example, John Grierson’s *Drifters* (Britain, 1929), Basil Wright and Harry Watt’s *Night Mail* (Britain, 1936), and Pare Lorentz’s *The River* (U.S., 1937).
39. John Fante and Norman Foster, “It’s All True, Love Story,” screenplay, scene no. 23, Scripts, UCLA Theater Arts Library.
40. See Fante and Foster, “Love Story,” shooting script, 8, 2, and 6, respectively, Lilly Library; see also Fante and Foster, “It’s All True, Love Story,” screenplay, scene nos. 63 and 80, respectively, Scripts, UCLA Theater Arts Library.
41. See Fante and Foster, “It’s All True, Love Story,” screenplay, scene nos. 37 and 47, respectively, Scripts, UCLA Theater Arts Library.
42. John Fante and Norman Foster, “Love Story,” shooting script, 1, Lilly Library.
43. See Tom Petty to Herb Drake, 27 March 1942, 1, Lilly Library; Norman Foster and John Fante, “My Friend Bonito,” screenplay, n.d., 1, Lilly Library; and Marguerita’s dialogue in Orson Welles, “It’s All True,” shooting script, 2 September 1943, 14, Lilly Library.
44. The main sources for this information are Carmen Solórzano, interview by au-

- thor, audiotape recording, Mexico City, Mexico, 6 March 1991; and Cintrón, *Aprendiendo a vivir*, 209.
45. See notations in Norman Foster and John Fante, “My Friend Bonito,” shooting script, Joyce Fante Personal Papers, 4–5.
 46. See *ibid.*, 6.
 47. See, for example, Chávez, *Musical Thought*, especially 8–15.
 48. See Parker, *Carlos Chávez*, i, 68, 70.
 49. Esperanza de la Torre Madrazo, interview by author, 16 March 1991; and Pedro Chávez de Lara, interview by author and Esperanza de la Torre Madrazo, audiotape recording, La Punta hacienda, Jalisco, Mexico, 16 March 1991.
 50. Orson [Welles, Los Angeles,] to Norman Foster [La Punta, Jalisco], 8 November 1941, Lilly Library.
 51. See de la Vega Alfaro, *Del muro a la pantalla*, 37–38 and 43, respectively; 45–71.
 52. In Bazin, Bitsch, and Domarchi, “Entretien avec Orson Welles,” 222.
 53. In the “Brazil” program of the *Hello Americans* series, CBS radio, 15 November 1942, Welles uses this trope both to make the abstract geography of Rio de Janeiro more tangible to the radio listener and to introduce the concept of a dual urban social space, both of which are necessary to understand the samba. The full utterance is, “If you think Rio’s front lawn is gay, Rio’s back yard [the favelas] is even gayer.”
 54. See Morel, “The Story of the Jangada in Brazil,” 4–9, Lilly Library.
 55. Edmar Morel, interview by author and Marcos Bonisson, 29 August 1989. See also “Orson Welles Chegou Ontem a Fortaleza,” *O Povo*, 9 March 1942. For possible inclusion of the plane with flowers, see Orson Welles, “NOTE: the bed—the kitchen— . . .,” production notes for “Jangadeiros,” n.d., Lilly Library.
 56. See “Beginning of Picture,” treatment fragment, n.d., Lilly Library. *Para-filmic* refers to the web of concurrent activities not recorded within the film, yet directly affecting its production and completion.
 57. Orson Welles, “Carnaval, Treatment for the Film Itself,” 42, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
 58. See “Picture Notes,” n.d., Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers (these notes are reproduced in figure 13, page 64).
 59. George Fanto, interview by author and Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda, audiotape recording, Stamford, Connecticut, 16 April 1987; and descendants of Manoel “Jacaré” Olímpio Meira, interview by author and Marcos Bonisson, videotape recording, Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil, 19 August 1989.
 60. From “Other Necessary Work,” n.d.; and “Story Line,” n.d., Lilly Library; and Francisca Moreira da Silva, interview by author and Marcos Bonisson, audiotape recording, Nôvo Maracanaú, Ceará, Brazil, 18 August 1989.
 61. Edmar Morel, interview by author and Marcos Bonisson, 29 August 1989.
 62. De Alencar, *Iracema*. *Iracema* was originally published in 1865. I have inferred this intertextual linkage from information provided to me by Mike Zamb.
 63. I am grateful to José Inácio de Melo Souza for calling my attention to this film, which is cataloged as *Cine-jornal Brasileiro*, no. 88, vol. 2, Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda, Cinemateca Brasileira, São Paulo, Brazil.
 64. According to George Fanto, various setups were done of women and children, as well as elderly people, that could have served in either the “Funeral” or “Departure” scenes as reaction shots; George Fanto, conversation with the author,

- July 1993, Lee, Massachusetts. This information is corroborated by notes for shooting “The Departure,” which simply call for “more women and little children . . .”; see figure 13, page 64.
65. Much of the information on the use of the Eyemo was provided by Antônio Afonso de Albuquerque, interview by author, 26 November 1990; and “Picture Notes,” Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
 66. For more on the neorealist phase in Latin American filmmaking of the fifties and sixties, see Paulo Antônio Paranaguá, “Of Periodizations and Paradigms: The Fifties in Comparative Perspective,” *Nuevo Texto Crítico* 21/22 (January–December 1998): 31–44.
 67. For photograms of these particular scenes, see Cook, *A History of Narrative Film*, 164, 166–167; and Leyda and Voynow, *Eisenstein at Work*, 124 and 129, respectively.
 68. See Cook, *A History of Narrative Film*, 196. Photograms from Pudovkin’s *Mother* (1926) illustrating this principle can be found in *ibid.*, 194, 195.
 69. See, for example, Naremore’s analysis of the sequence of the townspeople gossiping in *The Magic World of Orson Welles*, 95–96.
 70. Beatrice Welles, interview by author, audiotape recording, New York, New York, November 1991.
 71. Francisca Moreira da Silva, interview by Bill Krohn, 16 January 1993.
 72. See “Memorandum to Mr. Welles from Robert Meltzer,” n.d., Box 17, Folder 12, Lilly Library.
 73. Dorival Caymmi, telephone conversation with author, January 1993, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Mr. Caymmi did not have any recollection of recording music for *It’s All True*, however.
 74. Aluísio de Alencar Pinto, conversation with the author and Bill Krohn, January 1993, Rio de Janeiro.
 75. I am referring specifically to *Bacchianas Brasileiras*, no. 5 (1938), *Modinhas e Canções*, vol. 1, composed between 1933 and 1942, and the guitar “Preludes” composed by Villa-Lobos in 1940. My thanks to Marc Benamou for explaining the potential resemblance and distinctions between the *modinha* and the *cantiga*.
 76. See Costa, “Villa-Lobos eleva a música brasileira,” 12P–13P.
 77. Candeia, “A Flor e o Samba,” as sung by Beth Carvalho and Zeca Pagodinho, “Seleção de Pagodes,” *Beth Carvalho*, compact disc 532 281–2, “20 músicas do Século XX” series, Millennium, PolyGram, Brazil, 2000.
 78. For the ideological implications and aesthetic dimensions of the “packaging” of Latin America for North American consumption in this film, see Julianne Burton-Carvajal, “‘Surprise Package’: Looking Southward with Disney,” in Smoodin, *Disney Discourse*, 131–147.
 79. This episode had a number of other titles, including “The Story of Samba.” For additional commentary on the cultural politics and representational strategies in this episode, see Stam, “Orson Welles, Brazil, and the Power of Blackness,” 93–112; and Benamou, “*It’s All True* as Document/Event,” 121–152.
 80. Frances Flaherty, Robert Flaherty’s widow, has explained this technique as “the pre-condition to discovery, because it is a state of mind. When you do not preconceive, then you go about finding out. There is nothing else you can do. You begin to explore.” Quoted in D. Marie Grieco, “The Seminar: A Brief History” (New York: International Film Seminars, n.d.), 4.

81. Orson Welles, "Carnaval," n.d., 2–6, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
82. Ibid., 3–4.
83. See Grierson, *Grierson on Documentary*, 103–106.
84. Ibid., 107; emphasis added.
85. See ibid., 108–110, for a fuller comparison of these approaches.
86. Catholicism was the preferred religion of the conservative elements within the Vargas regime, and the open celebration of the Afro-Brazilian religions *candomblé* and *umbanda* was outlawed. See chapter 6 for the relationship of religious politics in Brazil to the suspension of *It's All True*.
87. Herivelto Martins, interview by author, 4 January 1991.
88. In a later version of this sequence, Welles extended the sound bridge by inserting the scene of a car radio, listened to by a romantic couple enjoying the view from Rio's hilltops, between the samba practice and the radio station. See "It's All True," supplemental shooting script, 2 September 1943, 44, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
89. Orson Welles, "Carnaval: Treatment for the Film Itself," 17, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
90. Ibid.
91. Ibid., 21.
92. See Robert Stam, *Tropical Multiculturalism: A Comparative History of Race in Brazilian Cinema and Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 81, 85.
93. Orson Welles, "Carnaval: Treatment for the Film Itself," 29; emphasis added.
94. Ibid., 31.
95. Ibid., 38.
96. Another preliminary structuring of the Carnival material (which appears to predate Jacaré's death, as well as Welles's political troubles) is provided in "Outline Synopsis: Carnival Sequence," n.d., Lilly Library.
97. See Mendonça, *Carmen Miranda Foi a Washington*, 16–19.
98. Orson Welles, "Carnaval: Treatment for the Film Itself," 39, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
99. Ibid., 34.
100. Levaco, *Kuleshov on Film*, 184.
101. Ibid., 48–49.
102. See Rolnik, "Territórios Negros nas Cidades Brasileiras," 36.
103. See Orson Welles, "Carnaval," treatment, n.d., Scripts, UCLA Theater Arts Library; and "It's All True," supplemental shooting script, 2 September 1943, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
104. See the quotation from Welles's introduction to the English version of Conchita Cintrón's autobiography, *Memoirs of a Bullfighter*, page 184.
105. Abigail Mauricio Horta, interview by author, audiotape recording, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 12 January 1991.
106. Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata, interview by author, 30 August 1989.
107. Flanagan, quoted in Houseman, *Run-Through*, 247.
108. Herivelto Martins, interview by author, 4 January 1991; Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata, interview by author, 30 August 1989.
109. Herivelto Martins, interview by author, 8mm videotape recording, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3 January 1991.

110. Orson Welles, “Carnaval,” introduction to treatment, n.d., 7–8, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
111. “Studio,” n.d., Lilly Library, 2. I have deliberately chosen these two sequences to demonstrate the degree to which Welles would use a similar visual strategy, regardless of the social connotations of the event or its venue. For the atmospheric contrast between the Teatro Municipal and Praça Onze, see figures 21 and 22, respectively, on pages 108 and 110.
112. For example, in the “Brazil” program of the *Hello Americans* CBS radio series, Welles gives enthusiastic credence to the capacity of his North American listeners to learn to dance to samba as though it were “swing.”
113. Elliot Paul to Orson Welles, 28 August 1941, Lilly Library.
114. See Elliot Paul, “It’s All True,” rough draft continuity script, 29 August 1941, RKO Scripts.
115. See Charters and Kunstadt, *Jazz*, 296.
116. For more discussion of contemporary efforts to fuse jazz with classical music formats and venues, see *ibid.*, 305, 308.
117. See Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism*, 220–247.
118. See Zwerkin, *La Tristesse de Saint Louis*. According to Zwerkin, “St. Louis Blues” was camouflaged as “La Tristesse de Saint Louis,” hence the title of his book.
119. Orson Welles, “*It’s All True*,” supplemental shooting script, 2 September 1943, 23–28, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers. The details of this episode in terms of plot, historical events, and characterization are *not* provided in this script, both because it was submitted mainly as a “wraparound” narrative for existing material and presumably because Welles did not want to push his luck (it would have required new sets, casting, and shooting) at a particularly precarious moment in the history of his relations with RKO. Indeed, it is not inconceivable that at this juncture, Welles might have abandoned the idea of a screen dramatization altogether in favor of a story to be narrated in voice-over, accompanied by footage of the Peruvian Andes, in the context of his conversation with Harry Wild and Shifra Haran in the hotel room.
120. For these and other details of Atawallpa Inka’s encounter with the Pizarros, see Kirkpatrick, *The Spanish Conquistadores*, 157–166.
121. All quotations from the radio program have been transcribed directly from a cassette copy of a 78 rpm recording of “The Andes,” radio broadcast, *Hello Americans* series, 22 November 1942, CBS Radio, Lilly Library.
122. I use *wording* rather than *scripting*, since Welles was known to have improvised regularly on his radio programs.
123. This is probably from the Quechua *Inti*, the term the Inkas used to refer to themselves, more accurately translated as “people of the sun.” Welles’s terminological fidelity to the Quechua language does not extend, however, to the conquistadors, whom the Inka, and many Quechua-speaking peoples, referred to as *viracochas*, or “bearded white men”; see Bermúdez-Gallegos, “Atahualpa Inca: Axial Figure in the Encounter of Two Worlds,” in Jara and Spadacini, *Amerindian Images and the Legacy of Columbus*, 9:612.
124. See, for example, Ward, Prothero, and Leather, *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol. 2, *The Renaissance*, 45.
125. Cited and interpreted by Bermúdez-Gallegos in “Atahualpa Inca,” 611, 614–616.

126. Ibid., 612.
127. Ibid., 622.
128. See *ibid.*, 607–608.
129. See *ibid.*, 611–612, 621.
130. See *ibid.*, 622 and 621, respectively.
131. I am grateful to James McIntosh for pointing out that at the same time, a U.S. audience might have been only too ready to believe in the so-called Black Legend of the Spanish conquest; indeed, the U.S. invasion of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines in the 1890s was legitimated by such a belief.

CHAPTER 3: POSTPRODUCTION

1. Bazin, Bitsch, and Domarchi, “Entretien avec Orson Welles,” 219–220.
2. RKO’s commitment to release *It’s All True* was announced in “Await Welles’ Return from Brazil for Second Episode of RKO Battle,” *New York Times*, 8 July 1942, n.p., Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers. The statement regarding *Journey into Fear* is by Welles’s attorney, Lloyd Wright, quoted in the same article.
3. Brady, *Citizen Welles*, 346.
4. See “Assistant Secretary, RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., to Orson Welles and Mercury Productions, Inc.,” [contractual agreement, unsigned], 1 September 1942, microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
5. George Fanto, interview by author and Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda, 16 April 1987, audiotape recording, Stamford, Connecticut; and Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 312–313, 318–319. Cf. Welles’s denial of ever having seen any rushes from “Jan-gadeiros” in Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 162.
6. [Orson Welles] to Nelson [Rockefeller], Washington, D.C., 20 October 1942, Lilly Library.
7. Nelson A. Rockefeller, Coordinator, Washington, D.C., to Orson [Welles], New York, TLS, 10 November 1942, Lilly Library.
8. See “Office of the Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Documentary films—English,” MPD, CIAA, NAR Record Group 4, 2–3, Rockefeller Family Archives.
9. See Doherty, *Projections of War*, 270.
10. See [author unknown] to N. Peter Rathvon, CG, 26 April 1943, microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
11. See Phil Reisman to N. P. Rathvon, TMS, 9 September 1943, microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
12. See J [José] Noriega to Orson [Welles], TLS, 14 January 1944, Lilly Library; and José Noriega, “Corrida de Toros,” n.d., Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers. For the footage possibly corresponding to this sequence, see seven cans labeled F109-R16–2-M43852, “Final Bullfight,” containing fifty-seven rolls of nitrate negative at the UCLA Film and Television Archive, Hollywood, California.
13. Orson Welles in “My Friend Bonito,” *Orson Welles’ Sketchbook* television series, produced by Huw Wheldon, British Broadcasting Corporation, 1955.
14. See Leon Goldberg to John Hamilton, “It’s All True,” TM, 19 December 1944, microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.

15. See Tubby to Sidney L. Lipsitch, TLS, and encl., 14 May, 1945, microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
16. See Garrett Van Wagner to N. Peter Rathvon, 30 December 1946, microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
17. See White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 121–122.
18. The term *comeuppance* is used by Barbara Leaming in *Orson Welles*, 266; the term *curse* is Richard Jewell's, cited in the introduction, note 5. For *It's All True* as a "wound," see Thomson, *Rosebud*, 238. Evidently, not all Wellesologists are Wellesiphiles.
19. See Williams, "The Romantic Author," in *Culture and Society*, 32. Williams traces this particular view of the author to the segregation of art from other types of socially productive activity in late-nineteenth-century industrializing society; *ibid.*, 30, 32, 34–36.
20. See Higham, *Orson Welles*, 201 and 203, respectively.
21. Cf. Robert Stam's comments on the "moralistic and at times even prosecutorial" tenor of Charles Higham's account of Welles's conduct in Brazil, in "Orson Welles, Brazil, and the Power of Blackness," 94.
22. See Lynn Shores to Dr. Alfredo Pessoa, TLS, 11 April 1942, 1; emphasis added. See also Lynn [Shores] to Mr. Walter Daniels [RKO Studios], TLS, 16 February 1942, 1; and Lynn [Shores] to Walter [Daniels], TLS, 3 March 1942, 1. All documents are from the Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
23. See especially Jewell, "George Schaefer, Orson Welles." In his article, Jewell does a careful and conscientious reading of the RKO documents but fails to assess them against comparable documents and other evidence from the perspective of Mercury Productions. Moreover, Shores could only have offered speculations as to what was occurring with the production: he admitted to being excluded from many production conversations taking place between Welles and his close collaborators.
24. Jewell, "A History of RKO Pictures, Incorporated," vol. 1.
25. "Squalor" is conveyed in Charles Higham's third account, *Orson Welles*, 195; and in Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 289–306; "mystification" is Jean-Claude Allais's term in "Orson Welles," 23.
26. Lynn [Shores] to Mr. Walter Daniels, TLS, 16 February 1942, 1, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
27. For a similar argument regarding the discursive utility of the grotesque body, see Stallybrass and White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, 192. The figurative aging of Welles's body has also emerged as a function of his "aging" physiognomy through the use of theatrical disguises in his youth (as in *Citizen Kane*), as well as retrogressive projections based on images of the more corpulent, bearded Welles that circulated in his later years.
28. The late Edmar Morel recalled that while working for Welles in Rio, he drank his first Coca-Cola, which was brought in by the "caseload" for the RKO crew; see Edmar Morel, "Minha Experiência com Orson Welles (ou como ganhei meu primeiro dólar e uma garrafa de coca-cola)," *Jornal do Commercio* (Rio de Janeiro), 16 September 1984.
29. Headline of article in *A Noite* (Rio de Janeiro), n.d., English translation from Portuguese, Lilly Library.

30. See, in particular, Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 289, 305–306, and *passim*. Leaming frequently refers to all Brazilians indiscriminately as “natives.”
31. See Higham, *Orson Welles*, 195 and 198, respectively. With the exception of the “teething baby” phrase, all other words and locutions in this quotation are Higham’s.
32. Stallybrass and White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, 193.
33. For a historical analysis of the use of this epithet in relation to young U.S. artists during the thirties, see Sklar, “Welles before *Kane*,” 63–72.
34. Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 76. I am grateful to Carroll Smith-Rosenberg for this reference, as well as her readings of Douglas’s theorization of the “physical” in relation to the “social” body.
35. *Ibid.*, 82; emphasis added. For an alternative interpretation and contextualization of Welles’s “Rabelaisian body,” see Stam, *Subversive Pleasures*, 139, 251n32.
36. See Brady, *Citizen Welles*, 335.
37. Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 78–79.
38. The first quotation is from “Welles Prodded to Take Up ‘Journey,’” *Hollywood Reporter*, 11 July 1941. The second is from “Welles to Mexico for Native Film,” *Hollywood Reporter*, 17 September 1941; emphasis added.
39. See Lynn [Shores] to Walter [Daniels], TLS, 30 April 1942, 1, Richard Wilson—Orson Welles Papers. See also Stam, *Tropical Multiculturalism*, 125–127.
40. “Explanation by Welles of Purposes; Interview in Rio,” n.d., 3, Lilly Library; emphasis added.
41. Senna, “Tourada Panamericana,” 62; emphasis added.
42. See, for example, the account given of Welles’s relationship to RKO and his struggle to save *It’s All True* in Salles Gomes, “A aventura brasileira.”
43. For a cogent discussion of how new filmmaking tendencies, the Cinema Novo and the underground experimental cinema, evolved in response to these challenges and opportunities, see Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*.
44. See Mouesca and Orellana, *Cine y Memoria del Siglo XX*, 180, 182.
45. De Lemos, “Filmes de Carnaval,” 287. See also “Orson Welles não se casou com Dolores del Rio,” 6.
46. See de Moraes, *O Cinema de Meus Olhos*, 65.
47. Edmar Morel, “Varios criados à disposição: Jacaré Fez Blague ao Ser Apresentado a O. Welles no Copacabana Palace,” *Correio do Ceará*, 6 March 1942.
48. See de Moraes, *O Cinema de Meus Olhos*, 86.
49. “O Cidadão Kane Passeia na Bahia: Que é ‘Rosebud’ . . .,” *Estado da Bahia*, 7 March 1942.
50. “Orson Welles Chegou Ontem a Fortaleza,” *O Povo*, March 1942.
51. See Celestino Silveira, “Orson Welles—Cidadão Kane Carioca,” *Cine-Rádio Jornal*, no. 188 (11 February 1942): 2. For the favorable impact of Welles’s critique of Hollywood on the local Brazilian intelligentsia, see also de Melo Souza, “A Carga da Brigada Ligeira,” 1:123–124.
52. “Life Goes to Rio Party: Orson Welles Frolics at Famous Mardi Gras,” *Life*, 18 May 1942, 98.
53. See, for example, Silveira, “Orson Welles—Cidadão Kane Carioca.”
54. “Isidoro como Substituto de Jacaré . . .,” *O Povo*, 18 July 1942.
55. See Eric Smoodin, “Introduction,” in Smoodin, *Disney Discourse*, 11.

56. See Silveira, “Orson Welles—Cidadão Kane Carioca,” 2; emphasis added.
57. See Pierre Macherey, “Literary Analysis: The Tomb of Structures,” extract from *A Theory of Literary Production* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), in Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 193.
58. On this point, see François Truffaut, “Welles et Bazin,” prefatory essay to Bazin, *Orson Welles*, 21, 42. See also André Bazin, “La vieille tradition des expérimentateurs,” in *ibid.*, 132–133.
59. Higham, *Films of Orson Welles*, 85–86.
60. See, for example, the contractual details discussed in Ross R. Hastings to Mr. Charles W. Koerner, RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., Inter-Departmental Communication, 27 April 1942, 1–3, RKO General Archives. See chapter 6 for a discussion of this contract in relation to RKO’s plans to discontinue *It’s All True*.
61. See Mercer, “Dark and Lovely Too,” 242, 256n4. Mercer uses this phrase to describe the pressures facing black filmmakers “once they gain access to the apparatus of representation,” namely, the obligation to serve their respective communities as well as fulfill their own creative and political impulses.
62. Truffaut, “Welles et Bazin,” 42.
63. Here I am in agreement with Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto’s assertion that the determining emphasis placed on the author as subject and ultimate referent of textual enunciation in auteur criticism is less a function of the structuralist paradigm per se than of the way that paradigm has been applied in auteurist analyses of film texts. See Yoshimoto, “Myth of Demystification in Structural Film Criticism,” 51–64.
64. See Orson [Welles] to Norman Foster, cablegram, 18 October 1941, Lilly Library.
65. Thomson, *Rosebud*, 237. Such a denial of *any* preexisting textual referent is of course not a precondition for the interpretive freedoms associated with Derrida’s concept of “dissemination.”
66. Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 76.
67. Michel Philippon, “D’un monde réaliste à un univers énuclée: Quelques étapes de la pensée moderne,” in Vadé, *Ce que modernité veut dire*, 1:162.
68. See Mercer, “Dark and Lovely Too,” 254.
69. According to Roland Barthes, a “readerly” text presumes a transparency in style along with structural unity, so that it favors passivity on the part of the reader, whose job resides only in decoding the author’s meaning; by contrast, a “writerly” text is self-reflexive enough in its construction so as to encourage the reader to take notice of its discontinuities and to create new, unanticipated meanings through active textual interpretation; see Stam, “From Realism to Intertextuality,” 192. In a dialogical approach to textual interpretation, the identities of both author and reader are affirmed in the act of reading yet are given equal weight and are differentiated from each other. See Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 107–108.
70. For more information on efforts at historiographical and physical preservation of international women’s cinema, visit the Women Film Pioneers Project at <http://www.duke.edu/web/film/wfp/>.
71. Carmen Solórzano, interview by author, 6 March 1991.
72. See David Ramón, “Introducción,” in Ramón, *La Santa de Orson Welles/Orson’s Santa*, 9–13.

73. Robert M. Levine, "Introduction: Genevieve Naylor and Brazil," in Levine, *Brazilian Photographs of Genevieve Naylor*, 1.
74. See *ibid.*; and Robert M. Levine, "Naylor in Brazil," in Levine, *The Brazilian Photographs of Genevieve Naylor*, 1 and 43, respectively.
75. Naylor's presence in Minas Gerais and Bahia has been confirmed by her son Peter Reznikoff in the video documentary *Brazilian Images: The 1940s Photographs of Genevieve Naylor*, dir. Peter Reznikoff and Tânia Cypriano, 1996. For Naylor's guidance of Welles in Rio, see letter from Genevieve Naylor to Cynthia Gillipsie, n.d., quoted in Levine, "Naylor in Brazil," 39.

CHAPTER 4: ALMOFALA

1. See, for example, Michel Foucault's response to this criticism of the structuralist orientation of his work in *The Order of Things*, xii–xiii.
2. See Yoshimoto, "Myth of Demystification in Structural Film Criticism," 57, 63.
3. On Welles's early resistance against being pigeonholed as a vanguardist, see Truffaut, "Welles et Bazin," 21.
4. Peter Wollen, "The Auteur Theory," in *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, 104; emphasis added.
5. *Ibid.*; emphasis added.
6. Naremore, *The Magic World of Orson Welles*, 122; see also *ibid.*, 123–145.
7. As Wollen asserts, "What the auteur theory does is to take a group of films—the work of one director—and analyse their structure. Everything irrelevant to this, everything non-pertinent, is considered logically secondary, contingent, to be discarded." Wollen, "The Auteur Theory," 104.
8. See, for example, Naremore, *The Magic World of Orson Welles*, 111–122; and Anderegg, *Orson Welles, Shakespeare, and Popular Culture*, 47–54, 57–73.
9. See Anderegg, *Orson Welles, Shakespeare, and Popular Culture*, 29, 144–147, 154–163; Naremore, *The Magic World of Orson Welles*, 85–86, 125, 172–175; and Rosenbaum, "Welles' Career: A Chronology," 368–369, 377–378, 380, 383, 400–405, 409, 412–416, 420–426, 428–442.
10. Wollen, "The Auteur Theory," 105.
11. Armstrong, *Swing That Music*, 29–31.
12. Part of the vernacular of the jazz community, "goin' to town," as Louis Armstrong has defined it, "means cuttin' loose and takin' the music with you, whatever the score may call for." *Ibid.*, 30. Welles's skill in selecting collaborators, and thus ensuring his success as an author, was shared with me by Chris Wilson, conversation with author, Santa Monica, California, 12 December 1999.
13. In another passage, Armstrong refers to the original swing musicians he had learned from as "composers and players, all in one"; Armstrong, *Swing That Music*, 72.
14. See Saxton, "The Collective Voice as Cultural Voice," 401.
15. For the attenuation of the boundary between nonfiction and fiction in literature based not on specific modes of practice but on the essential work of producing narrative in either mode, see Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, 14–15.

16. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, emphasis added.
17. For an explanation of the term *pro-filmic*, see chapter 1, note 81.
18. Truffaut, “Welles et Bazin,” 21; emphasis in the original.
19. Gunning, “Narrative Discourse and the Narrator System,” 475.
20. See José Noriega, “Corrida de Toros,” Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, 1–23.
21. Rosenbaum, “Orson Welles’s Essay Films and Documentary Fictions,” in *Placing Movies*, 172–173.
22. *Ibid.*, 173.
23. See Louis Armstrong to [Leonard] Feather, 18 September 1941, reprinted in Armstrong, *Louis Armstrong, in His Own Words*, 147.
24. See Flaherty, *The Captain’s Chair* (1938), copyright page.
25. Bart Whaley, *The Man Who Was Magic* (Bart Whaley, 2005), vol. 1, 49–54, comments on Welles’s special effects in theatrical productions, notably his variations on “black art.” For filmic examples of Welles’s work with prestidigitation, see *Journey into Fear*, *F for Fake*, “Orson Welles and the Magic Castle” (television broadcast), and the unfinished *The Magic Show* (1981–85).
26. See Benjamin, “The Storyteller,” 84, 92–93, 96.
27. “Beautiful Cloud-Filled Sky,” supplemental script, n.d., 1, Lilly Library.
28. White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 8.
29. See Kracauer, *Theory of Film*, 245–246.
30. Barthes, “Diderot, Brecht, Eisenstein,” in *Image, Music, Text*, 77; even though Barthes capitalizes “Law,” he is referring to the “law of society, the law of struggle, the law of meaning” in the historical sense, rather than to the Law of Lacan’s psychoanalytic theory; *ibid.*
31. My gratitude to the late George Fanto, who, having worked as cinematographer at Hollywood studios and at Cinédia Studio in Rio, brought this scantily recorded history of the adoption of film technology in Latin America to light.
32. In de Moraes, *O Cinema dos Meus Olhos*, 97–98. See Paulo Emilio Salles Gomes, “Notícia sobre a Polêmica do Rio,” *Clima* (São Paulo), June 1942, 105–120; and de Melo Souza, “A Carga da Brigada Ligeira,” for a broader contextualization of this debate.
33. See de Melo Souza, *Paulo Emilio no Paraíso*, 447–448.
34. *Ibid.*, 173; emphasis added.
35. See García Riera, *Historia documental del cine mexicano*, 1:47–48, 51, 104, 111. Santa’s director, Antonio Moreno, had also been a star on the silent Hollywood screen.
36. Orson Welles, in the voice-over narration for *The Magnificent Ambersons*, as rendered in the cutting continuity script, “Reel 6, Section B,” reprinted in Carringer, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, 242–243.
37. See Connell-Smith, *The United States and Latin America*, 169–176, 179–185, 190.
38. Rowe and Schelling, *Memory and Modernity*, 17. See also Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*, 43, 60–61, 127–154.
39. See Connell-Smith, *The United States and Latin America*, 177–178, 181–182.
40. “Algiers,” Mercury Productions Campbell Playhouse series, CBS Radio, broadcast 8 October 1939; “Heart of Darkness” illustrated screenplay, Mercury Productions, 1939, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.

41. See Baker, *Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance*, 25–36, 49–69.
42. “Lucy Meets Orson Welles,” *I Love Lucy* television series, dir. James W. Kern, Desilu Productions, broadcast on CBS, 15 October 1956. I am grateful to Susan Ohmer for calling my attention to this episode.
43. Orson Welles, quoted in de Moraes, *O Cinema de Meus Olhos*, 98.
44. Bogle, *Toms, Coons, Mulattos, Mammies, and Bucks*, 122. For a description of Scott’s performance style, see *ibid.*, 124.
45. See Babha, *The Location of Culture*, 111–116.
46. See Morel, “Minha Experiência com Orson Welles.”
47. In this respect, Welles can be seen as sharing Flaherty’s precept that “some day we will wake up and discover that it takes more than machines to win this war, it also takes people”; Robert Flaherty, quoted in Rotha, *Robert J. Flaherty*, 230.
48. Orson Welles, “Introduction,” in Cintrón, *Memoirs of a Bullfighter*, viii.
49. Welles, as quoted in Tom Pettey [publicist for RKO] to Herb Drake, 27 March 1942, Lilly Library, 1. Similar assertions are made by Welles in “It’s All True,” treatment, 2 September 1943, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
50. The quotations are from Stam, *Subversive Pleasures*, 195, 14; and Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 60–61, respectively.
51. García Riera, *México visto por el cine extranjero*, vol. 3, 1941–1969, 75.
52. *Ibid.*, 160; and García Riera, *México visto por el cine extranjero*, vol. 4, 1941–1969, *Filmografía*, 204.
53. See Welles’s comments on Charles Foster Kane’s character in dynamic contrast with Jed Leland’s, the references to lawyers (such as are portrayed in *The Lady from Shanghai* and *The Trial*), and his description of Gregory Arkadin’s character in Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 83, 198, and 238, respectively. See also Naremore, *The Magic World of Orson Welles*, 50, 144.
54. Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 241.
55. Naremore, *The Magic World of Orson Welles*, 50.
56. Rocha, *O Século de Cinema* (Rio de Janeiro: Alhambra/Embrafilme, 1985), 19–20.
57. Cabrera Infante, *A Twentieth Century Job*, 12.
58. Warrick, quoted in McClelland, *Forties Film Talk*, 185.
59. Jonathan Rosenbaum, telephone conversation with the author, June 2002.

CHAPTER 5: LABIRINTO

1. From Orson Welles, “Un film est un ruban de rêves,” in Bessy, *Orson Welles*, 92.
2. This was the length Welles was originally planning for the film, as reported in “Orson Welles Tries Four-Unit Program,” *Hollywood Reporter*, 25 August 1941.
3. See Klinger, “Film History Terminable and Interminable,” 304.
4. See Grierson, *Grierson on Documentary*, 178.
5. “New Script Quest Points to Pix Biz Going the South American Way,” *Variety*, 25 October 1939.
6. For Brazil, see Johnson, *The Film Industry in Brazil*; for Mexico, see Mora, *Mexican Cinema*, 59.
7. See, for example, “Brazilian Govt. Grants Delay on New Tax Bite,” *Hollywood Reporter*, 16 January 1941.

8. See Doherty, *Projections of War*, 207–213.
9. The reader is invited to view Warner Brothers' recruitment propaganda musical *This Is the Army* (dir. Michael Curtiz, 1943), starring George Murphy and Ronald Reagan, which contrasts markedly with the more liberal, race-conscious *Stormy Weather* (dir. Andrew Stone) and released by Twentieth Century-Fox the same year.
10. See Doherty, *Projections of War*, 213–216, 220.
11. "[T]he footage shows the filmmaker or cameraperson at personal risk"; in Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 84.
12. See *ibid.*, 3–4.
13. "Choro Interlude," n.d., N, Lilly Library.
14. "It's All True," screenplay, n.d., Lilly Library, 11.
15. "51A (Actually same setting as 49) Night," script fragment, n.d., Lilly Library, 57.
16. Mary Ann Doane, "The Voice in the Cinema: The Articulation of Body and Space," in Braudy and Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism*, 380.
17. [Tom Pettey?], "It's All True," Mercury publicity material, n.d., microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
18. Ana M. López, "Are All Latins from Manhattan? Hollywood, Ethnography, and Cultural Colonialism," in King, López, and Alvarado, *Mediating Two Worlds*, 68.
19. See Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 144; concerning indexicality, he goes on to explain, "[P]hotographic images . . . re-present the visual field before a lens but they have no ability whatsoever to distinguish, or to allow us to distinguish, the historical status of that field"; *ibid.*, 150.
20. See [Orson Welles], "In motion pictures we use the term 'documentary film' . . .," n.d., 1, Welles MS, Box 4, Folder 20, Lilly Library; and Rotha, "Films of Fact and Fiction," in *Rotha on the Film*, especially 208–209, 212. Rotha's essay was originally published in the United States in *Theatre Arts* journal in 1938, and thus was accessible to Welles.
21. [Orson Welles], "In motion pictures we use the term 'documentary film' . . .," n.d., Lilly Library, 1; emphasis added.
22. For a more ample discussion of the impact of neorealism in postwar Latin American cinema, see Paranaguá, "Of Periodizations and Paradigms."
23. Still no. 1/37, *Redes/The Wave* collection, Ned Scott Archive, Louisville, Kentucky.
24. See Zinnemann, *An Autobiography*, 26.
25. Established in 1930, the New York Film and Photo League was dedicated to the documentation of social conditions and popular protests during the Depression, as well as the training of workers to use photographic media; Paul Strand, together with other members of the league, formed the documentary group Frontier Films in 1936; see Barsam, *Non-fiction Film*, 146–151; and Russell Campbell, *Cinema Strikes Back: Radical Filmmaking in the United States, 1930–1942* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982). Immediately following his work on *Redes*, Strand traveled to the Soviet Union, where he met Eisenstein; see "Paul Strand, 1890–1976, Biography," <http://www.temple.edu/photo/photographers/strand/biography.html>.
26. Zinnemann, *An Autobiography*, 37.
27. See García Riera, *Historia Documental del Cine Mexicano*, vol. 2, 1938–1942, 229–230.

28. Corrigan, "The Cinematic Essay," 89.
29. See Altman, *Film/Genre*, 123–143.
30. See Polan, *Power and Paranoia*; Polan notes the marked contrast among Hollywood genre films along synchronic and diachronic axes, as film noir slowly comes to overtake the patriotic combat film in popularity and stylistic prominence.
31. See João Luiz Vieira's groundbreaking study, "Hegemony and Resistance: Parody and Carnival in Brazilian Cinema" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1984), for the use of parody in cross-cultural representation in Brazilian cinema.
32. Like *chanchadas*, the Mexican *cabareteras*, appearing in the immediate postwar period, were backstage musicals, infused, however, by melodrama and imbued with the style, tone, and marginal or "failed" characters associated with film noir.
33. "Show Mexican Comedy," *Hollywood Reporter*, 25 June 1941.
34. See Ramírez Pimienta, "Del rancho al arrabal," 214–216.
35. See Genette, *The Architext*, 72–73, for a discussion of generic hierarchies and the Aristotelian definition of various genres.
36. Rozado, *Cine y realidad social en México*, 65–70; see also Ramírez Pimienta, "Del rancho al arrabal," 215–216.
37. Gutiérrez Alea, "The Viewer's Dialectic," 188–189; emphasis in the original.
38. Quoted in [Tom Pettey?], "It's All True," Mercury publicity material, n.d., microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
39. Cf. "Synopsis of *It's All True*," n.d., microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, 1.
40. As Stam has noted, according to Bakhtin, artistic texts are to be critically understood as dialogical phenomena within the "differentiated unity of the epoch's entire culture;" Bakhtin, quoted in Stam, *Subversive Pleasures*, 191.
41. For Bakhtin, these are the characteristics that constitute and define individual utterances within speech genres; *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 60.
42. "This is a picture divided into several parts," [treatment for "Carnaval"], Lilly Library, 1.
43. Neupert, *The End*, 114.
44. Newman, "Reterritorialization in Recent Chicano Cinema," 95.
45. William Gordon to Mr. Reg. [Reginald] Armour, "It's All True," TMS, 13 May 1942, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
46. "Synopsis of *IT'S ALL TRUE*," n.d. [probably mid-1942], 3, microfilm roll 7, "Welles Collection," RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers; all capitals in original.
47. For the United States, see Barsam, *Non-fiction Film*, 146–162, and Barnouw, *Documentary*, 112–121; for Brazil, see Levine, *Father of the Poor?* 57–62. "Functional democracy" was Vargas's own phrase to euphemize his style of rule; *ibid.*, 61.
48. Amâncio, *O Brasil dos Gringos*, 65–66.
49. Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, 34; emphasis in the original.
50. *Ibid.*, 34 and 35, respectively; emphasis in the original.
51. See Richter, *The Struggle for the Film*, 51.
52. For these trends in Brazilian modernist literature, see Santiago, "The Permanence of the Discourse of Tradition in Modernism," 93–110.
53. See Glauber Rocha, "An Esthetic of Hunger," trans. Randal Johnson and Burnes Hollyman, in Johnson and Stam, *Brazilian Cinema*, 69–71.

54. Ramos's autobiographical novel about his experiences under Vargas was published posthumously; Ramos, *Memórias do Cárcere*.
55. See "Favor Latin Locales Instead of Cheap Films in Spanish," *Variety*, 18 October 1939.
56. Talmadge Anderson, *Introduction to African American Studies* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, 1993), 252; and Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 91, both quoted in Rhines, *Black Film/White Money*, 65 and 182n33, respectively.
57. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 78.
58. Klinger, "Film History Terminable and Interminable," 303.
59. García Riera, *México Visto por los Estados Unidos*, 3:31.
60. On this subject, see MacDougall, *Transcultural Cinema*, 28–56, 102–122, 150–163, and *passim*.
61. This was conveyed to me by Jerônimo's niece, Corina de Souza Santos, in interview by author, audiotape recording, Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil, 24 November 1990.

CHAPTER 6: ZOOM, PAN, AND RACK FOCUS

1. In a speech given at the dedication of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, 10 May 1939; quoted in Mercey, "The United States," 5.
2. "As Verdadeiras Razões do Regresso de Orson Welles a Hollywood—Sou uma Vítima dos Novos Chefes da R.K.O.-Radio!" *A Cena Muda*, no. 1115 (4 August 1942): 12.
3. See Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 121–127.
4. See Joe [Noriega] to Jack [Moss], 3 December 1941, 3. To all appearances, the crew remained on cordial terms with the censor. See also F. Gregorio Castilla, P.A. del C. Secretario, El Jede del Departamento [de Supervisión Cinematográfica, Dirección General de Información, Secretaria de Gobernación, México, D.F.] to C. José Noriega, Representante de Mercury Production, Inc., re: Concede autorización para filmar las películas que se indican, TLS, 5 September 1941, which grants Mercury the permission to film in Mexico. Both documents are from the Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
5. See Enrique Solío, por el Comité Ejecutivo, El Secretario General [Unión de Trabajadores de Estudios Cinematográficos de México, México, D.F.] to Mercury Productions, Inc., Culver City, Calif., TLS, 6 September 1941, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers. The letter states: "[W]e have always offered our cooperation to foreign Companies that have come to our country with similar proposals and once again, we will show our best faith in working together so that you can happily complete what you are proposing, as long as the interests of our organization are not affected. You may rest assured of finding all of the necessary facilities here, as we think that the kind of film production that you intend to carry out will conform to the norms that we have established."
6. Stuart Hall, "Introduction," in Hall et al., *Culture, Media, Language*, 36.
7. See Hilton, "Brazilian Diplomacy and the Washington–Rio de Janeiro 'Axis' during the World War II Era," 201–231; see also Levine, *Father of the Poor?* 9–10, 47, 52–57.

8. *New York Times* coverage of the Pan-American Conference of Foreign Ministers in January 1942 is rife with these descriptions—the Argentine foreign minister, representing the only nation that did not join the Allied cause at that conference, is vividly depicted as a sinister, shifty individual, directly accountable for Argentina’s nonconformity. See also Douglas, *Risk and Blame*, 125–126, for the stress placed on individual agency in economic analysis.
9. See Douglas, *Risk and Blame*, 31.
10. Antônio Girão Barroso, interview by author, audiotape recording, Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil, 29 October 1990.
11. See Barsam, *The Vision of Robert Flaherty*, and Rotha, *Robert J. Flaherty*, for references to Flaherty’s difficulties; see also D.F.Z. [Darryl F. Zanuck] to Mr. Jean Renoir, 30 July 1941; D.F.Z. to Mr. Len Hammond [associate producer], Mr. Jean Renoir, and Mr. Irving Pichel, 2 August 1941, and D.F.Z. to Mr. Jean Renoir, 8 August 1941, reprinted in Behlmer, *Memo from Darryl F. Zanuck*, 51–54.
12. Allais, “Orson Welles,” 24–25. For the term, *découpage*, see chapter 2, note 5.
13. See “Discussion of General Subject Matter, Tone, Aims, Etc.,” notes for memorandum, n.d., Peter Bogdanovich Papers; “Problems of Photographing Carnaval,” production notes, n.d., Lilly Archive; and Orson Welles, “This Is a Picture Divided into Several Parts,” treatment, and “Footnotes” [drafted by Richard Wilson], n.d., Lilly Library.
14. Welles, “This Is a Picture Divided into Several Parts,” 10.
15. “Problems of Photographing Carnaval.”
16. “Discussion of General Subject Matter, Tone, Aims, Etc.,” 1.
17. Richard Wilson, interview by author, 14 May 1988.
18. See, for example, Orson Welles to Jack Moss, 14 March 1942, Peter Bogdanovich Papers; and Orson Welles to Phil Reisman, 15 March 1942, Lilly Library.
19. See for example, [unknown, but probably Phil Reisman] to Orson Welles, 15 March 1942, Peter Bogdanovich Papers; see also Jewell, “George Schaefer, Orson Welles, and IT’S ALL TRUE,” 330.
20. See “Rio’s Carnival in a Great Technicolor Film,” English translation from the Portuguese, encl., 16 December 1941, Lilly Library.
21. “The Favelas in the Film of Orson Welles: Not Agreeable to the Taking of These Scenes,” English translation from *Diário da Noite*, 22 April 1942, Lilly Library.
22. De Melo Souza, “Ação e Imaginário de uma Ditadura,” 390–391; and Levine, “Rockefeller’s OIAA,” 30, in Levine, *The Brazilian Photographs of Genevieve Naylor*.
23. Wm. [William] Gordon to Mr. C. W. Koerner, TMS, 10 September 1943, microfilm roll 7, 2, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
24. I say this in recognition of the fact that, to a U.S. audience, most Brazilian screen performers may not appear strictly “white,” although within the Brazilian racial spectrum they would be perceived to be of European or “white” descent.
25. Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata, interview by author, 30 August 1989.
26. See, for example, “Carioca Carnival Is Going to Be Very Dark on the Screen,” English translation from *Meio Dia*, 28 April 1942, Lilly Library.
27. Lynn Shores to Dr. Alfredo Pessoa, Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda, 11 April 1942, Lilly Library, 1. This letter is relatively tame; in internal correspondence with RKO, Shores goes so far as to use the “n” word not once but often.
28. William Gordon to Mr. C. W. [Charles] Koerner, RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., 9 July

- 1942, RKO General Archive; see also Stam, “Orson Welles, Brazil, and the Power of Blackness,” 108–110, for further references to RKO’s objections to racial representation in *It’s All True*.
29. See Vidor, *A Tree Is a Tree*, 176–177, 187. Vidor relates that Nicholas Schenck, chairman of the board at MGM, refused initially to fund the sound version of *Hallelujah!* on the grounds that it would not have been shown in southern “white theaters.”
 30. The letters are housed in the Orson Welles Manuscripts, Lilly Library.
 31. Robinson, *Coal to Cream*, 109.
 32. Many of these extras were brought in by Herivelto Martins, who had close ties to the favelas; Herivelto Martins, interview by author, 4 January 1991.
 33. Reports of a knife fight breaking out between two of the carioca extras on the Cinédia soundstage, leading to ten serious injuries during the filming of “Carnaval” reenactments, can only have fueled the trepidations of U.S. observers close to the production; Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata, conversation with author, 30 January 1991, Rio de Janeiro.
 34. See Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital,” 243–244, 246. Although Bourdieu developed these distinctions in the context of formal education, they apply to other realms of cultural policy and conduct. An “embodied state” denotes how, “in its fundamental state, [cultural capital] is linked to the body and presupposes embodiment,” whereas the “objectified state” refers to the material forms taken by this capital. In its “institutionalized state,” cultural capital is “a form of objectification which must be set apart because . . . it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee.”
 35. See Mendonça, *Carmen Miranda Foi a Washington*, 55–56.
 36. For Vargas’s use of radio, see Levine, *Father of the Poor?* 61–62. See also García Canclini, *Las culturas populares en el capitalismo*. As García Canclini explains, the popular designates “a position and an action” taken, rather than a particular object or message; “popular meaning and value are acquired through social relations”; Canclini, *Las culturas populares*, 151.
 37. Robert Meltzer to Doc [Orson Welles], TLS, 3 July 1942, Lilly Library, 3. For samba school registration, see Levine, *Father of the Poor?* 40.
 38. See Levine, *Father of the Poor?* 35–38, for the empowerment of conservative Catholicism under Vargas.
 39. Ligiéro and Coelho, “*Malandro*, Rogue and Street Hustler,” 11.
 40. *Ibid.*, 3–4; and Ligiéro, “Carmen Miranda.”
 41. Robert Meltzer to Doc [Orson Welles], 3 July 1942, Lilly Library, 1.
 42. See *ibid.*; and Antônio Pedro Tota, “Samba da Legitimidade,” 8–13.
 43. Tota, “Samba da Legitimidade,” 10.
 44. The former deduction is patently evident in RKO memos that discuss the possible uses of the footage after the suspension of the film; the latter is not explicitly articulated by RKO executives, with the exception of Reginald Armour’s accusation of Welles’s “draft-dodging,” but is strongly implicit in the contemporary uses of the label “Communist,” discussed later in the chapter.
 45. Orson Welles, in “Arena: The Orson Welles Story,” British Broadcasting Company, 18 May 1982.
 46. Quoted in Jewell, “George Schaefer, Orson Welles, and IT’S ALL TRUE,” 331.

47. William Gordon to Mr. C. W. [Charles] Koerner, 10 September 1943, RKO General Archive, 2.
48. Jim Wilkinson to Mr. Ross Hastings, 15 November 1952, RKO General Archive, 1.
49. Quoted in Stam, “Orson Welles, Brazil, and the Power of Blackness,” 104–105.
50. See Higham, *The Films of Orson Welles*, 92; Jewell, “George Schaefer, Orson Welles, and IT’S ALL TRUE”; Jewell with Harbin, *The RKO Story*, 141; and Thomson, *Rosebud*.
51. Allais, “Orson Welles,” 23–24; Higham, *The Films of Orson Welles*, 85–86; Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 289–320; Thomson, *Rosebud*, 208–213, 216–219, 222–224; Jewell, “Orson Welles, George Schaefer, and IT’S ALL TRUE,” 325–335; Jewell with Harbin, *The RKO Story*, 141–142; Friedrich, *City of Nets*, 385. Although it is somewhat too early to tell, Simon Callow seems to be following Allais’s and Thomson’s lead in perceiving the Latin American voyage as a destructive distraction; he stresses the criticisms of *Citizen Kane* that arose in Welles’s physical absence from the spring 1942 Academy Awards ceremony—disregarding completely how the nomination was valued in Latin America and boosted Welles’s image during the tour—and positions *It’s All True* clearly in the category of the “sustained falling apart” of “the remaining forty-five years of Welles’s life”; see Callow, *Orson Welles*, 576–578. The ambassadorship, along with the geocultural context in which Welles was working, appears to have been misunderstood even by those who otherwise admire Welles as a director and lend the emerging *It’s All True* the “benefit of the doubt” as a text; see, for example, Brady’s commentaries in *Citizen Welles*, 333–349. The single exception to this general rule is James Naremore’s account in *The Magic World of Orson Welles*, 84–86, which recognizes the political stakes, as well as the seriousness of the film project itself.
52. “Obediently—Welles Lets Foster Take Pilot Credit in His Pic,” *Variety*, 14 January 1942, 24.
53. Jewell, “A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.,” 666. Unfortunately, this totally unfounded assertion appears again later in Jewell, “Orson Welles, George Schaefer, and IT’S ALL TRUE,” 328.
54. Armour, quoted in *ibid.*, 331. I attempted to interview Mr. Armour in Los Angeles in 1989, but he abruptly declined, saying he was “too busy.”
55. “Move for Close Latin American Ties,” *Film Daily*, 15 January 1941, 6.
56. Sources for this paragraph include Copland and Perlis, *Copland, 1900 through 1942*, 322–329; “Bing Crosby Also Returns from South America,” *Motion Picture Herald*, 25 October 1941, 29; “Disney to Mexico City on Films for OCIAA,” *Motion Picture Herald*, 16 October 1943, 32; Peter Reznikoff, telephone conversation with author, 10 July 1996, New York City; Taper, *Balanchine*, 197–198.
57. According to historian Robert M. Levine’s narration in the videotape *Brazilian Images: The 1940s Photographs of Genevieve Naylor*.
58. Douglas Fairbanks Jr., interview by author and Antônio Pedro Tota, 1 April 1989.
59. See Weinberg, *A World at Arms*, 505. See also Hilton, *Hitler’s Secret War in South America*.
60. References to this relationship appear in several Welles biographies, including his own autobiographical commentary in Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 13, 150.
61. Salles Gomes, “A aventura brasileira.”

62. See, for example, the testimony of Richard Wilson in *It's All True: Based on an Unfinished Film by Orson Welles*. For Welles's own account, see Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 252–253.
63. See “Disney's Ad Lib Goodwill Travelog to Be Released,” *Variety*, 3 December 1941, 1.
64. “Disney's First Latin Shorts Ready Soon,” *Motion Picture Herald*, 6 June 1942, 44; “First Disney Feature Ready for S.A. Market,” *Film Daily*, 1 July 1942, 1, 8. The North American English-language version was not released until early December 1942.
65. From Simon, “Orson Welles: A Catalogue of Works,” 153–154.
66. See Berger, *Aaron Copland*, 17–18, 104; Copland's compositions were published by the *Boletín Latino-Americano de Música* in 1941, the year of his trip; see *ibid.*, 100; and Copland and Perlis, *Copland, 1900–1942*, 325–326.
67. This applies especially to Welles's “Pan American Day” broadcast, 14 April 1942, where he is accompanied by Brazilian foreign minister Oswaldo Aranha, and his “President Vargas' Birthday” broadcast, 18 April 1942, both on the NBC Blue network.
68. Jewell, “George Schaefer, Orson Welles, and IT'S ALL TRUE,” 334.
69. Levine's narration in *Brazilian Images*.
70. Jewell, “George Schaefer, Orson Welles, and IT'S ALL TRUE,” 328.
71. Evidenced in a letter from Gwladys [Scott] to [Ned Scott], 4 March 1942, Papers of Ned and Gwladys Scott, Ned Scott Archive, Louisville, Kentucky.
72. Joseph Biroc, interview by author, Bill Krohn, and Myron Meisel, 25 September 1992.
73. Jewell, “George Schaefer, Orson Welles, and IT'S ALL TRUE,” 334.
74. To this day, researchers have been trying to locate this lost print, since it is believed to contain the scenes that were reshot or cut from the film.
75. The epithet was applied by an “alcoholic vaudevillian” named Frank Fay, quoted in Friedrich, *City of Nets*, 385.
76. Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 252; see also note 139 below.
77. In local usage, the term *macumba* technically applies to the practice of *quimbanda*, or cult of Exú, as a variant of *umbanda* religion. However, it is also commonly used outside the observant community to refer generically (and derogatorily) to *all* forms of Afro-Brazilian religion; in this sense it is equivalent to the usage of the terms *voodoo* and *black magic* in the United States to refer not only to Haitian *vodún* but to all forms of Afro-Caribbean worship.
78. This argument appears most forcefully in “George Schaefer, Orson Welles, and IT'S ALL TRUE.” Other, similar references to *It's All True* appear in Jewell, “A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.,” 2:665–703; and Jewell with Harbin, *The RKO Story*, 141–142.
79. I use *global* in two senses: to mean “comprehensive,” taking all sources of profit and loss, long- and short-term, into account, and in the sense that RKO was by this time a *transnational* corporation that recouped its investments in both foreign and domestic markets.
80. See Jewell, “A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.,” especially 2:677, but also 687–681, 699.
81. This amount, moreover, represented a *portion* of the OCIAA's total budget that

year for cosponsorships in the form of guarantees, which totaled \$520,000. The office's willingness to invest in this type of project is perhaps better reflected in its outlay of \$15,000 per month for the production of propaganda shorts (in house), \$285,000 allocated in 1942 for equipment used in modernizing Mexican film studios; and \$75,000 in 1941 for a *tour* of movie celebrities to Mexico City. In 1942, the OCIAA was also contemplating allotting \$450,000 for the guarantee against losses of *Mexican*-produced films geared toward the war effort, as part of the Prencinradio project. See Rowland, *A History of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs*, 79, 82; "Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Motion Picture Division," 22 April 1942, 8, RFA-NAR-MPD; and "Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Motion Picture Division, Summary of Plan to Stimulate Production of Motion Pictures by Mexican Industry in Support of War Effort," 3–4, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Record Group 4, Personal Projects Series, John Hay Whitney, 1942–1946, Box 263, Folder 2627, Rockefeller Family Archives (this folder henceforth referred to as RAF-NAR-JHW).

82. William Gordon to Mr. C. W. [Charles] Koerner, 10 September 1943, RKO General Archives, 3; emphasis added.
83. This per-picture budget figure is mentioned by George Schaefer in a letter delivered to Welles in May 1942, quoted in Jewell, "George Schaefer, Orson Welles, and IT'S ALL TRUE," 331–332. The letter in question is G. J. [George] Schaefer to Mr. Orson Welles, 29 April 1942 [original is in Peter Bogdanovich Papers], 1.
84. See Jewell, "George Schaefer, Orson Welles, and IT'S ALL TRUE," 332; "RKO Radio Pictures, Inc. 'It's All True,' Negative Cost at July 30, 1942 (*Unfinished Picture*)," Production Information File, UCLA Theater Arts Library; and Wilson, "It's Not *Quite* All True," 193. Jewell's figure is identical to the one provided in "RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., Picture Cost Budget, *It's All True*, Combined," 12 May 1942, Production Information File, UCLA Theater Arts Library, last line, first column. The difference between Wilson's and RKO's final figures is attributable not only to the "overhead" costs added by RKO but to storage and laboratory costs that RKO continued to add to the production cost on a monthly basis.
85. See Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 164.
86. Jewell, "A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.," 666.
87. [Richard Wilson], "Discussion of General Subject Matter, Tone, Aims, Etc.," Peter Bogdanovich Papers, 3. See also Herb Drake, "Orson Welles' 'It's All True' represents . . .," [press release], n.d. [ca. April–May 1942], Box 17, Folder 21, Lilly Library. According to Jewell, *The Magnificent Ambersons* cost the studio \$1,125,000; see Jewell, "A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.," 2:765. James Naremore places the cost of *Citizen Kane* at \$749,000, whereas Jewell quotes Schaefer, who places it at "nearly \$900,000." See Naremore, *The Magic World of Orson Welles*, 83; and Jewell, "A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.," 2:675.
88. Reflecting on the RKO-Mercury contractual situation, an RKO attorney wrote: "[A]s I understand it, he [Welles] went down without a budget, without a script, and without any particular controls over him"; Gordon Youngman to N. Peter Rathvon, "Orson Welles," 2 July 1942, microfilm roll 7, 3, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.

89. Jewell, "George Schaefer, Orson Welles, and IT'S ALL TRUE," 332; see also "RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., Picture Cost Budget, *It's All True*, Combined," 12 May 1942, *It's All True* Production Information File, UCLA Theater Arts Library, last line, second column.
90. J.J. Nolan to Mr. Sid Rogell, TMS, 22 February 1949, microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
91. See Drake, "Orson Welles' 'It's All True' represents . . .," 1.
92. See "Preliminary Budget Detail, Labor and Material, Supervision," 6 April 1942, last line; and "RKO Radio Pictures, Picture Cost Budget, *It's All True*, Combined," 12 May 1942, first line, second column, both documents from *It's All True* Production Information File, UCLA Theater Arts Library.
93. "RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., Picture Cost Budget, *It's All True*, Mexican Sequence," 12 May 1942, *It's All True* Production Information File, UCLA Theater Arts Library, lines 8, 15, and 30, second column, and lines 15 and 30 first column.
94. "RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., Picture Cost Budget, *It's All True*, Rio Sequence," 12 May 1942, *It's All True* Production Information File, UCLA Theater Arts Library, lines 17, 20, and 24, second column, and lines 20 and 24, first column.
95. "RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., Picture Cost Budget, *It's All True*, Studio," 12 May 1942, *It's All True* Production Information File, UCLA Theater Arts Library, lines 1 and 30, second column. I should note that by 20 June 1942, immediately prior to Schaefer's resignation, the estimated budget for the "Studio" had jumped miraculously from U.S.\$295,272 to U.S.\$336,249; *ibid.*, last line, second column, and "RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., Picture Cost Budget, *It's All True*, Studio," 20 June 1942, *It's All True* Production Information File, UCLA Theater Arts Library, last line, second column.
96. Ray Josephs to Francis Alstock [OCIAA], enclosure, 5 August 1942, RKO General Archives, 2. Welles also claimed that roughly 60 percent of the picture cost could be "chalked up to the charges for transporting the 35-man company to Brazil, an item which could be calculated even before the Mercury Company left the U.S.," reported in *ibid.*
97. George Schaefer to Mr. Orson Welles, 29 April 1942, Peter Bogdanovich Papers, 2–3.
98. "RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., Budget of Production Cost, *It's All True*, Mexican Sequence, My Friend Bonito," 21 April 1942 [additions dated 25 April 1942], *It's All True* Production Information File, UCLA Theater Arts Library, 3.
99. See Ross R. Hastings to Mr. Charles W. Koerner, Inter-Department Communication, 27 April 1942, RKO General Archives, 1–3.
100. See "Budget on four men on a raft," [with handwritten notations], n.d., microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers, which appears to show two figures: \$11,000 (hand calculation) and \$12,550 (based on hand calculation); see also Wilson, "It's Not *Quite* All True," 193. In mid-May 1942, Schaefer had set the maximum budget for the completion of the entire film (including remaining "Carnaval" sequences) at \$30,000. See Schaefer, quoted in Jewell, "A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.," 2:676.
101. Jewell, "A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.," 2:695.
102. See Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 371–372.
103. See "Memorandum of Proposed Deal with Orson Welles for Two Pictures—

- Predicated on Conversations at Which Mr. Joseph Breen, Mr. Orson Welles and Mr. C. J. Schaefer Were Present,” 25 July 1941, encl. G. J. Schaefer to Mr. J. I. Breen, 25 July 1941; see also Gordon E. Youngman to N. Peter Rathvon, “*Orson Welles*,” 2 July 1943, for legal complexities; both documents are from microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
104. See G. J. Schaefer to [Mr.] Orson Welles, 20 March 1942, microfilm roll 9, RKO General Archives. The discrepancy was around \$77,000.
 105. “Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Motion Picture Division, Summary of Plan to Stimulate Production of Motion Pictures by Mexican Industry in Support of War Effort,” 3, RFA-NAR-JHW.
 106. Nelson A. Rockefeller to Sumner Welles [Under Secretary of State], letter, 26 May 1942, RFA-NAR-MPD.
 107. García Riera, *Historia Documental del Cine Mexicano*, 2:50.
 108. Cited in Woll, *The Latin Image in American Film*, 59.
 109. Shale, *Donald Duck Joins Up*, 108. Although I do not have sufficient information to substantiate this, it seems unlikely that the cost of *Saludos Amigos* cited here includes the cost of Disney’s production trip to Latin America, which was covered by the OCIAA; see note 116 below; see Jewell, “A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.,” 2:704, for RKO. The “cheapies” in question were on Axis-related subjects: *Hitler’s Children* and *Behind the Rising Sun*.
 110. Shale, *Donald Duck Joins Up*, 108.
 111. See Gomery, *The Hollywood Studio System*, 125; all these figures represent “net” profits and losses.
 112. See Jewell, “A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.,” 2:678–679, 681, 700–704; see also Schindler, *Hollywood Goes to War*, 56. Schindler states that in 1942, earnings from individual films were reaching “their highest for fifteen years,” while an “average of 90 million admissions” was being recorded at U.S. box offices on a weekly basis; *ibid*.
 113. Gilberto Souto, “Cidadão Kane,” *Cinearte* no. 550 (15 August 1941): 22.
 114. Don “Q,” “Hollywood,” *Cine Mundial*, June 1941, 262.
 115. See Don “Q,” “Hollywood,” 262; and “Rio Carnival . . .” [unknown source], December 1941, Lilly Library.
 116. According to Jewell, *Suspicion* had a production cost of \$1,102,000 and garnered a net profit of \$425,000; see Jewell, “A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., 1928–1942,” 2:762.
 117. Naremore, “The Trial,” 22–27; Naremore obtained this file through the Freedom of Information Act.
 118. Here I disagree with Otto Friedrich, who claims that, although Welles was investigated by the FBI, he was in no danger of coming under the onus of HUAC investigations later in the decade. Accordingly, I am in agreement with Naremore, who states that there is sufficient reason to suspect that Welles might have been blacklisted had he remained in the United States after 1947. Indeed, an FBI memo requesting that a “security index file” be prepared on Welles in November 1944 (reproduced in Naremore’s article) classifies Welles as a “Native Born/Communist.” See Naremore, “The Trial,” 22, 27. For labor conflicts dur-

- ing this period, see Joseph, “Re: Unions in Hollywood,” 34–50; and Russell, “A Letter from Hollywood,” 97–103.
119. Edmar Morel, interview by author and Marcos Bonisson, 29 August 1989. *Comuna* is Brazilian slang for “Communist.”
 120. José Olimpio Meira, interview by Bill Krohn, DAT recording for 35mm film, Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil, 23 January 1993.
 121. See Orson Welles et al., “Synopsis of *IT’S ALL TRUE*,” n.d. [ca. mid-1942], microfilm roll 7, 3, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
 122. See the testimony of Jacaré’s children in appendix 1; a contemporary newspaper account also reported allegations by the three surviving *jangadeiros* that someone from Ceará attempted to prevent Jacaré from speaking to President Getúlio Vargas about the situation of the *jangadeiros*, and that the Fishing Federation of Ceará celebrated Jacaré’s death “with champagne”; “Grave Denúncia dos Jangadeiros,” *Diário Carioca* (Rio de Janeiro), cited in “Os Jangadeiros Cearenses Fazem Denúncias,” *O Povo*, 28 July 1942, 3.
 123. See, for example, Richard Wilson’s cable to Herbert Drake, 19 May 1942, Peter Bogdanovich Papers, in which Wilson describes Jacaré as “a great natural leader and popular hero.”
 124. See Levine, *Father of the Poor?* 56–57. See also Levine, “Rockefeller’s OIAA,” 27–29, and “Naylor in Brazil,” 37–38, for additional information regarding censorship, and intelligence and police operations under Vargas’s Estado Novo.
 125. Peter Reznikoff, telephone conversation with author, 10 July 1996. See also Reznikoff and Cypriano, *Brazilian Images*.
 126. See (or listen to) “Orson Welles Commentaries: On the Ousting of Getúlio Vargas,” 4 November 1945, radio program [transcription], Lilly Library, 2, and also 5.
 127. See Naremore, “The Trial,” 24.
 128. For the Free Company and Harry Bridges, see *ibid.*, 23; for Harry Bridges, also see Bob [Robert Meltzer] to Orson [Welles], TLS, 3 March 1941, Lilly Library, and “Three Blind Americans!” *Downbeat*, 15 June 1941, 10. For American Committee for Russian War Relief, see Chaplin, *My Autobiography*, 401–402, 409–410; Chaplin states that Jack Warner warned him, without explaining why, *not* to attend the meeting at which Welles spoke; *ibid.* 409. For Welles’s and Hayworth’s involvement in the Sleepy Lagoon case, see Mazón, *The Zoot-Suit Riots*, 24. For Fante’s relationship to Carey McWilliams, see Seamus Cooney, “Introduction,” in Fante, *Selected Letters*, 9.
 129. See the Citizens Committee for the Defense of Mexican-American Youth, “The Sleepy Lagoon Case,” in Cortés, *The Mexican American and the Law*, 1.
 130. [Orson Welles], “Open Letter to Nelson Rockefeller from Hollywood,” n.d., Lilly Library.
 131. The first quotation is from Tenney, in Mazón, *The Zoot-Suit Riots*, 24; the second is from Acuña, *Occupied America*, 256.
 132. The FBI, quoted in Acuña, *Occupied America*.
 133. Quoted in Ronald Ross, “The Role of Blacks in the Federal Theatre, 1935–1939,” *Journal of Negro History* 59, no. 1 (January 1997): 43, cited in Hill, *Shakespeare in Sable*, 119.
 134. See Chaplin, *My Autobiography*, 410; and Mazón, *The Zoot-Suit Riots*, 25.

135. See [untitled, no author], TM, on “RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.” letterhead, encl., 24 June 1941, Lilly Library.
136. “Operations Report, Twelfth Week—April 7th to 13th inclusive,” RKO General Archives.
137. See “Diary of Orson Welles Group Activities,” encl. Memo CO-948, 27 April 1942, 4–5, Lilly Library.
138. Edmar Morel, interview by author and Marcos Bonisson, 29 August 1989; Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata, conversation with author, 30 January 1991; Herivelto Martins, interview by author, 4 January 1991.
139. See Leaming, *Orson Welles*, 289–290.
140. Taper, *Balanchine*, 197–198.
141. B.V., “Carnaval,” 22. That year there was a popular Carnival song, “Nós os Carecas” (“We, the Bald Men”), in which alternating stanzas were sung by rival groups of Carnival revelers dressed as either “Baldies” or “Hairy Ones.” In forties slang, an *abafadeira* was a “knockout” or “bombshell.”
142. See “The Death of Jacaré,” translated from *A Noite*, 21 May 1942, Lilly Library, for commentary on Jacaré and the accident; see also Nasser and Manzon, “O Julgamento de Orson Welles no Brasil,” 1.
143. For alternative observations on the “Carnaval” shoot, see de Moraes, *O Cinema de Deus Olhos*, 62–67; for Jacaré’s death, see Petronius, “Cinemas: Orson Welles Cannot Be Blamed for ‘Jacaré’s Death,” translation of article from *Jornal dos Sports* (Rio de Janeiro), 21 May 1942, Lilly Library; and “The Death of ‘Jacaré’ Was Not Filmed,” translation of article from *O Globo*, 22 May 1942, Lilly Library; for an alternative Brazilian perspective to Manzon and Nasser’s complaints, see Viany, “Orson Desvenda o Mistério,” 63, 66; and Alex Viany’s report, cited in Nasser and Manzon, “Orson Welles Responde às Acusações,” 1–2, both in Edmar Morel Personal Archive, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
144. See Weinberg, *A World at Arms*, 372.
145. See Jewell, “A History of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.,” 2:704–705. These changes in revenue were reported in the *New York Times* at the time.
146. See Ross R. Hastings to Mr. [Joseph] Breen, TMS, 21 November 1941, microfilm roll 7, 1, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers. It is not clear whether Welles actually signed this version of the contract.
147. Odium was appointed director of the Contract Distribution Division of the Office of Production Management in September 1941; see “Speed-Up Urged in Defense Clinic,” *New York Times*, 23 September 1941, 16. Note that this appointment was made *prior* to the official declaration of war on the Axis powers.
148. See Doherty, *Projections of War*, 14.
149. See *ibid.*, 207–210.
150. See Ramírez-Berg, *Latino Images in Film*, 76–77, for a discussion of Latina/o stereotyping in Hollywood cinema during this period.
151. See Lorentz, *FDR’s Moviemaker*, 77–104, especially 81. Lorentz’s CBS program featured music by Bernard Hermann and narration by Thomas Chalmers, and was itself controversial enough for the Ford Motor Company to cancel its advertising subscription to the series.
152. See Neve, *Film and Politics in America*, 96.
153. See, for example, Doherty, *Projections of War*, 13–14, 53–56, 300–304; even in

- the OCIAA's own records (NAR, Rockefeller Family Archives), it is clear that RKO was not among the leaders of studios participating in MPSA initiatives.
154. See "RKO Shorts on Nazi Acts in S.A.," *Hollywood Reporter*, 24 February 1941.
 155. See Schnitman, *Film Industries in Latin America*, 28.
 156. *Ibid.*, 30.
 157. Enéas Viany, "Cidadão Kane," *A Cena Muda*, 24 March 1942, 10. In Brazilian slang, a *pineapple* is a thorny situation without any easy solution; it is used here presumably as a doubly ironic reference to Miranda's attire in Hollywood films. *Droga* or *drug* is a poisonous affair, a disaster, or, in this movie business context, a "flop."
 158. Joseph Biroc, interview by author, Bill Krohn, and Myron Meisel, 25 September 1992.
 159. Thanks to Charles Gentry for redirecting my attention to this initial division of sentiment within RKO management.
 160. N. Peter Rathvon to [Mr.] Charles W. Koerner, TLS, 19 October 1942, microfilm roll 9, 2, RKO General Archives. Emphasis added.
 161. See Nelson A. Rockefeller, Coordinator (Washington, D.C.) to Jock [John Hay Whitney] (Washington, D.C.), TLS, 1 May 1942; and Jock [John Hay Whitney] to Nelson [A. Rockefeller] (Washington, D.C.), TLS, 5 May 1942, 1. As it happened, Whitney became a lieutenant colonel in the air force, and he agreed in his letter to Rockefeller to have his military engagement deferred until August 1942, when he could be replaced; see also Nelson A. Rockefeller (Washington, D.C.) to Jock [John Hay Whitney] (New York), TLS, 27 July 1943, 4; all in RFA-NAR-JHW.
 162. See [Orson Welles] to Nelson [Rockefeller] (Washington, D.C.), 20 October 1942, Lilly Library; Nelson Rockefeller to Orson Welles, TLS, 10 November 1942, Lilly Library; see also William Gordon to [Mr.] C. W. Koerner, "Report on Meeting of the Board of Directors of Motion Picture Society of the Americas, May 24, 1943," TM, 25 May 1943, RKO General Archives.
 163. See N. Peter Rathvon to Charles W. Koerner, 19 October 1942, 2.
 164. See Barnard, *Argentine Cinema*, 150–152.
 165. See *ibid.*, 149–150. According to Barnard, in 1939, Argentina produced 50 films, as opposed to Mexico's 37; in 1942, Argentina produced 56 films, as compared to 42 for Mexico; and in 1943, the year the embargo began, Argentina produced only 36 films; the number continued to drop into the mid-1940s; *ibid.*
 166. See Johnson, *The Film Industry in Brazil*, 61. As Johnson reveals, Brazil was a relatively heavy consumer of Spanish-language films from Spain, Argentina, and eventually Mexico, whereas there are few signs of Brazilian films being marketed in reverse.
 167. See "Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Motion Picture Division," 22 April 1942, RFA-NAR-MPD.
 168. See Richter, *The Struggle for the Film*, 51.
 169. From "As Verdadeiras Razões do Regresso . . .," 12.

CHAPTER 7: THE LEGACY OF A PHANTOM FILM, 1945–2003

1. Jim Wilkinson to Mr. Ross Hastings, TMS, 15 November 1952, RKO General Archives.

2. See “Production #363—‘IT’S ALL TRUE,’” 20 December, 1944; see also Charles Bink to [Mr.] J. Wilkinson, TM, 26 December 1944, both on microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
3. George Fanto, interview by author and Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda, 16 April 1987.
4. Paramount Pictures was purchased by Gulf and Western in 1966; “Who Owns What: Viacom Corporate Timeline,” *Columbia Journalism Review*, <http://www.cjr.org/tools/owners/viacom-timeline.asp> (accessed 23 February 2005).
5. Higham, “*It’s All True*,” 92–98. Since Higham’s article was published, its historical weight has become questionable in that he claims to have rediscovered the definitive, forgotten cache of footage, whereas he appears to have located only the most accessible footage (totaling 11,000 feet), which studio archivists, such as Hazel Marshall, already knew about. For direct references to this footage, see also Higham, *The Films of Orson Welles*, 97. Higham viewed the footage in early 1969 and reported the event promptly to AFI administrators; see Charles Higham, San Francisco, to [R. S.] Kahlenberg, Culver City, California, LS, 18 January 1969, American Film Institute.
6. See Mr. Harry Gittleson to Vernon Harbin, RKO Inter-Department Communication, 31 August 1961, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers; Audrey Kupferberg, Assistant Motion Picture Archivist, American Film Institute, Washington, D.C., to Mr. Desi Arnaz, Del Mar, California, 24 August 1976; Audrey Kupferberg, Motion Picture Archivist, American Film Institute, Washington, D.C., to John Hall, RKO Radio [sic], Los Angeles, 7 August 1978; and John Hall, RKO Studio, Los Angeles, to Howard McClay, Lucille Ball Productions, Hollywood, California, TLS, 28 August 1978; the last three documents cited are from the American Film Institute.
7. Hazel Marshall’s comments were quoted to me by the late Susan Lafer, who was head archivist at the Paramount Footage Library in Los Angeles and spoke with Marshall in late April 1993; for Pellegrino, see Krohn, “À la recherche,” 28.
8. These scenes include “Praça Onze,” “Batuque no Morro,” and some reenacted scenes of Carnival processions in the streets of Rio in which Othelo appears as a celebrant.
9. See Kupferberg to Arnaz, 24 August 1976.
10. See “Fact Sheet: It’s All True: Four Men on a Raft” (Los Angeles: American Film Institute, 14 August 1986), photocopied; “Draft Minutes: IT’S ALL TRUE Curatorial Committee Meeting,” 3 September 1986, AFI Archive; and Krohn, “À la recherche,” 32. For AFI’s early interest in the footage, see R. S. Kahlenberg, Culver City, California, to Mr. Charles Higham, San Francisco, 3 February 1969; and George Stevens Jr., AFI, Los Angeles, to Bob Goodman, AFI, Washington, D.C., 25 June 1969, both at AFI Archive. The inventory of footage received by the American Film Institute from Paramount Pictures in March 1985 shows 249 cans of (nitrate) negative, 26 cans of stock shots from the Paramount Footage Library, and 5 cans of black-and-white nitrate positive of “various stock shots”; National Center for Film and Video Preservation, American Film Institute [receipt], Assistant to the Director, TDS, 22 March 1985, AFI Archive. To date, none of the Technicolor nitrate negative for *It’s All True* has been transferred to the American Film Institute or placed in the care of the UCLA archive.
11. The existence of the larger amounts of nitrate negative not accounted for in the

- Paramount Film Library was not made public until 27 August 1986; the short, 28-minute version of the reconstruction of *It's All True*, produced by Richard Wilson and Fred Chandler, premiered at the Venice Film Festival, 30 August 1986; see "Newsmakers"; and *Variety*, 6 August 1986, 10, respectively.
12. Bazin, Bitsch, and Domarchi, "Entretien avec Orson Welles," 222.
 13. Ibid.
 14. Gary Graver, telephone conversation with author, 22 September 2002.
 15. See N. Peter Rathvon to [Mr.] Charles W. Koerner, TLS, 14 September 1943, microfilm roll 7, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
 16. See N. Peter Rathvon [New York] to Mr. Charles Koerner [Los Angeles], TLS, 28 September 1943, 1; and [C. W. Koerner?] to Mr. N. Peter Rathvon, 1 October 1943, 2; both documents are from RKO General Archives; see also C. W. Koerner to [Mr.] N. Peter Rathvon, 5 October 1943, and encl. Melville Anderson, "Carnival in Rio (in Technicolor) with Fred Astaire, Carmen Miranda, Adolphe Menjou, Brown and Carney, Aurora Miranda, Carmen Miranda's Band, Outline of Suggested Story, Using RKO Footage Already Shot in Brazil," 3 pp.; and C. W. Koerner to [Mr.] N. Peter Rathvon, 8 October 1943, microfilm roll 7, 2–3, RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson–Orson Welles Papers.
 17. See Lewis J. Rachniel to Mr. Ross Hastings, TDS, 12 November 1952, 1, RKO General Archives.
 18. In a memorandum sent by Francis Alstock, the new director of the Motion Picture Division of the OCIAA, to Berent Friele, the director of the Brazilian Division of the OCIAA, several months after Welles's return to the United States, OCIAA's position is clearly stated: "The problem involved is in no way concerned with the quality of the picture, but involves a political issue developing from Welles's dispute with RKO"; Francis Alstock [Washington, D.C.] to Mr. Berent Friele [Rio de Janeiro], 30 December 1942, RKO General Archives.
 19. These clips appear in footage currently stored at the National Archive Motion Picture Library and are marked as "outtakes" for *March of Time* episode no. 200, 1023G. Shots from this reel were used in the 1993 documentary reconstruction of *It's All True*; most show Orson Welles as a "participant observer" shooting the Carnival celebration at Rio's Municipal Theater.
 20. Herivelto Martins, interview by author, 4 January 1991; and Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata, interview by author, 30 August 1989.
 21. In a letter to an attorney, after the release of *New Orleans*, Richard Wilson called attention to a noticeable resemblance between its story line and the basic concept of "The Story of Jazz"; Richard Wilson to Mr. Arnold Grant, 18 December 1946, Lilly Library.
 22. Gabbard, *Jammin' at the Margins*, 56; Kurt Jerde, conversation with author, 10 March 1988, Tulane Jazz Archive, New Orleans, Louisiana.
 23. Welles claimed he used his salary from *Jane Eyre* to pay for the lab processing of the "Jangadeiros" negative, which RKO had refused to develop along with the other footage; Orson [Welles] to Fernando [Pinto], TLS, 26 February 1943, Cinemateca Brasileira, São Paulo, Brazil, 1.
 24. Although I have not uncovered any hard evidence of the use of the Welles script in the development of *Notorious*, I find it to be entirely plausible, and some further research along these lines might yield interesting results.

25. See Mr. Ross Hastings to Lewis J. Rachnil, TDS, 12 November 1952, RKO General Archives.
26. "Brazil," *Hello Americans* series, CBS, 15 November 1942, Lilly Library; and "The Andes," *Hello Americans* series, CBS, 15 November 1942, Lilly Library.
27. Jacaré, quoted in "Jacaré's Diary," English translation, n.d., 8, Lilly Library.
28. See "First Nights" and "Bonito," in the *Orson Welles' Sketchbook* series, produced by Huw Wheldon, BBC television, 1955.
29. Bakhtin, quoted in Stam, *Subversive Pleasures*, 197.
30. Descriptions of both films can be found in Augusto, *Este Mundo É um Pandeiro*, 222–223.
31. These influences are reported by Sérgio Augusto in *ibid.*, 143–144. For more information about the plot, aesthetic, and ideologies in these films, see *ibid.*, and Vieira, "Hegemony and Resistance."
32. Both this movement and Sganzerla's films are discussed in Johnson and Stam, *Brazilian Cinema*, 39–40; Stam, "Brazilian Avant-Garde Cinema from *Limite* to *Red Light Bandit*," 35–42; and Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 23–25, 95–120.
33. See "Sganzerla, sete anos de pesquisa para registrar a vinda de Welles ao Brasil," *O Globo* (Rio de Janeiro), 11 June 1983.
34. De Andrade, *Macunaíma*.
35. For Eisenstein's influence on Mexican cinema, see de los Reyes, *Medio Siglo del Cine Mexicano*, 46–114; and García Riera, *Historia Documental del Cine Mexicano*, 1:44–46. For Eisenstein's ties to the muralists see also de la Vega Alfaro, *Del muro a la pantalla*.
36. Tomás Pérez Turrent, conversation with author, February 1991. See also the commentary by Emilio García Riera in *Historia Documental del Cine Mexicano*, vol. 3.
37. The exception is Paranaguá, "Of Periodizations and Paradigms," 38.
38. Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata, interview by author, 30 August 1989.

CONCLUSION: *IT'S ALL TRUE*,
ORSON WELLES, AND HEMISPHERIC HISTORY

1. See Welles and Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles*, 189.
2. See Naficy, *An Accented Cinema*, 19–36.
3. Interview with author, audiotape recording, Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil, 2 November 1990.
4. The new *raid* received support largely from a nonprofit, nongovernmental community development organization, Amigos da Prainha do Canto Verde, established in August 1991 several miles east of Fortaleza, on the coast of Ceará.
5. See "Mulheres na tripulação de jangadas cearenses," *O Povo* (Fortaleza), 11 June 1983, 21.
6. See "Caymmi recebe jangada que denuncia ameaça à pesca," 15.

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